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ABSTRACT

The seven articles in this journal issue survey and assess the art of rhetorical criticism based on evidence derived from critical practice. The first five articles analyze the literature subsumed with certain approaches to rhetorical criticism and are arranged in the chronological order of the emergence of the approach: neo-classical criticism, movement studies, and genre criticism. The two last articles attack the problem of critical practice on general terms and deal with the relationship between theory and practice. (FL)

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Western Journal of Speech Communication

VOL. 44, NO. 4 FALL 1980

SPECIAL REPORT: RHETORICAL CRITICISM: THE STATE OF THE ART

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THE WESTERN JOURNAL OF SPEECH COMMUNICATION
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Introduction

MICHAEL C. LEFF*

Nearly twenty-five years ago, in the spring of 1957, *Western Speech* published a special issue devoted to criticism and public address.[1] The seven essays contained in that issue were not selected or arranged according to any systematic principle, but almost all of them gravitated toward the same problem — the problem of reforming critical practice by finding new and more useful approaches to rhetorical criticism. In the ensuing years, this problem continued to dominate the thinking of rhetorical critics, dramatically increasing the number of available approaches to the art. Some of these approaches matured, assumed a fairly well defined form, and generated a substantial body of critical literature. This process led to profound changes in the field, and the time has come for a fresh appraisal of the state of the art.

Reappraisal, as the 1957 symposium demonstrates, often suggests reform, and in modern rhetorical criticism reform normally means attention to the development of new rhetorical bases for critical inquiry. As a consequence, there is a strong tendency to view the state of the art in theoretical terms and to relegate specific studies to the conceptual background. The present issue reverses this emphasis. Its purpose is to survey and assess the art of criticism based on evidence derived from critical practice. Some attention to the theoretical literature is both necessary and desirable, but the main focus rests on criticism as it is actually practiced.

The first five essays analyze the literature subsumed within certain identifiable approaches to rhetorical criticism. These essays are arranged in the chronological order of the emergence of the approach analyzed. Thus, the issue begins with G. P. Mohrmann's essay, ``Elegy in a Critical Grave-Yard,'' which deals with the mode of criticism variously called ``traditional,'' ``neo-Aristotelian,'' or ``neo-classical.'' The sequence then continues with Suzanne Volmar Rich~~es~~ and Malcolm Sillars on movement studies, Walter Fisher on genre criticism, Thomas Farrell on critical models, and Bruce Gronbeck on dramaturgical criticism. The two concluding essays by Edwin Black and myself attack the problem of critical practice in more general terms. Both deal with the troublesome question of the relationship between theory and practice, and both assume a more polemic tone than the preceding essays.

Wayland Maxfield Parrish once said that in assessing oratory we should measure fault not in terms of failure but of low aim, and the reader might apply this same adage to the essays that follow. The intent of the issue as a whole is to give some order to a vast and bewilderingly diverse literature and to ground its theoretical problems in the context of the particulars of critical practice. These goals are not always fully realized, but given the enormity of the task and its previous neglect, it would be unrealistic to expect a definitive result. And if these essays often ask critics to lower the initial angle of their vision, they also encourage them to raise their aim toward the highest function of rhetorical criticism — the explanation of the complex, variegated phenomena that constitute the substance of the art.

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*Mr. Leff is Associate Professor of Rhetoric, University of California, Davis.

[1] This issue, edited by Ernest Wrage, appeared under the title ``Symposium: Criticism and Public Address'' in *Western Speech*, 21 (Spring 1957). The essays in this issue, plus five others not included, were later reprinted in Thomas R. Nilsen, ed., *Essays on Rhetorical Criticism* (New York: Random House, 1968).

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Elegy in a Critical Grave-Yard

G. P. MOHRMANN*

It now has been fifteen years since the appearance of *Rhetorical Criticism*, and if that seems like only yesterday to some, many readers attracted to this special issue of the *Western Journal of Speech Communication* may not recall the state of the art at the time, nor will they recall reactions to the book. In the hope of giving them at least some faint hint of time and place — and especially for those who do remember — I turn to the source echoed in the title and to the first stanzas of Gray's "Elegy Written in a Country Church-Yard." Since the publication of *Rhetorical Criticism*, I have had difficulty responding to these lines as Gray might have wished, but if the images provoked are unpoetic, many seem particularly appropriate to the book and its reception.

> The curfew tolls the knell of parting day,
> The lowing herd wind slowly o'er the lea,
> The plowman homeward plods his weary way,
> And leaves the world to darkness and to me.
>
> Now fades the glimmering landscape on the sight,
> And all the air a solemn stillness holds,
> Save where the beetle wheels his droning flight,
> And drowsy tinklings lull the distant folds;
>
> Save that from yonder ivy-mantled tower
> The moping owl does to the moon complain
> Of such as, wandering near her secret bower,
> Molest her ancient solitary reign.

Those who do remember will recollect signs of near stampede in the lowing herd and the complaints of moping owls issuing from many ivy-mantled towers. Yet if Black tolled the knell of parting day for traditional criticism, he was not the first to molest the ancient solitary reign, for as he points out, his dissatisfaction was "not a singular emotion, if one may judge from the growing literature of professional protest and vocational self-analysis in the speech journals."[1] In that connection, Stewart has documented an increasing swell of protest during the thirties and forties, and for the ten years immediately preceding the publication of *Rhetorical Criticism*, he reports an "ever increasing discontent with traditional criticism."[2]

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*Mr. Mohrmann is Professor of Rhetoric, University of Califonia, Davis.

[1] Edwin Black, *Rhetorical Criticism: A Study in Method* (New York: Macmillan, 1965, rpt.: Madison, Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 1978), p. viii.

[2] Charles J. Stewart, "Historical Survey: Rhetorical Criticism in Twentieth Century America," in *Explorations in Rhetorical Criticism*, ed. G. P. Mohrmann, Charles J. Stewart, and Donovan J. Ochs (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1973), p. 19.

So in tolling the funeral note, Black rang Nine Taylors, but others had been ringing Major Bobs and Grandsires for years, had been ringing the changes of discontent for decades prior to 1965. Consequently, one is led to suspect that an examination of speech communication journals from 1961 through 1965 would reveal that traditional methods already were at low ebb, even though those who argued for new approaches "provided little actual methodology or illustration."[3] In any event, my assignment specified a contemporary perspective, and while I turned to the journals when gathering materials for this report, I inspected the run of publication for the past five years in two national and four regional entries, the 1975-1979 issues of the *Quarterly Journal of Speech, Communication Monographs, Western Journal of Speech Communication, Southern Journal of Speech Communication, Central States Speech Journal*, and *Communication Quarterly* for a grand total of nine hundred articles.[4]

A seemingly safe and sane perimeter, if somewhat unimaginative. Nevertheless, it no sooner had been established than my thoughts raced to Poe's narrator and his first view of that melancholy House of Usher, for "a sense of insufferable gloom pervaded my spirit. I say insufferable; for the feeling was un-relieved by any of that half-pleasurable, because poetic, sentiment with which the mind usually receives even the sternest natural images of the desolate or terrible." Unlike Prufrock, I thought I knew how to begin, but like him, I was afraid. I feared a desolate and terrible wasteland. I feared that the enterprise was predestined to end, not with a bang but a whimper. Within the established perimeter I had spent three years on the editorial board of the *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, and although it would not be fair to accuse the Editor of having been unconscionable in his demands, he did seem bent on making sure that my editorial hands would never stray to the devil's workshop. Yet I remembered having reviewed few critiques in the traditional mold, and an examination of my files confirmed the immediate impression. At best, I might just be facing an exercise in futility.

Furthermore, was it not more than a little presumptuous to undertake a post-mortem at this late date? This critical hobby-horse long since had been entombed, the Reverend Edwin Black presiding, and an exhumation now seemed the depth of folly. What putrefication awaited in the dank tomb? After the damp and the worms and the termites, what could I expect to find of the poor creature's carcass? Three tiny fragments of rusting proofs? Five small mounds of sawdust, one for each of the classical offices? Or would there be nothing at all, nothing but the fetid stench of puerile biography and vacuous history?

But wait! A sudden hope curbed that disasterous line of thought. Perhaps it was not a tale told by Poe. Madeline Usher, Berenice, and Fortunato did not survive their premature burials, but maybe our steed, too, had been buried alive, and what if plodding plowman and droning beetle and moping owl had met in seance to pass some sort of miarcle? It was possible. Though spavined, long in the tooth, and more than a little sway-backed, maybe our old and faithful mount still carried riders on their appointed rounds through the ranges of critical inquiry.

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[3] Ibid.

[4] *Communication Education* occasionally features discussions of critical theory but almost no critiques.

I can announce that it does. I have ridden the trail of the critical round-up in the pages of our journals, and if the ride had its box-canyons and dry water holes, I must report that both my hopes and fears were realized. There was some of life and some of death. To put it oxymoronically: traditional rhetorical criticism currently is in a state of moribund vitality. That figure will control the analysis here, and it seems most logical to talk first of life, then of death. A qualification, however, is necessary because the intent is not to begin by defining terms, to distinguish between and among "traditional," "neo-classical," and "neo-Aristotelian" criticism. In truth, I think I can recognize the presence of that for which I was told to look, think I can recognize the spoor of our beast.

In fact, some critics are quite content with old riding gaits and old starting gates. The walk, the trot, the canter, and the gallop are the four natural gaits, and we have the four natural gates of criticism in the four remaining classical offices, *memoria* having fallen out of the saddle-bags on the way West. The critic may not invoke Aristotle, Cicero, or Wichelns, but lines of investigation and the vocabulary may create a strong presumption; "the primary and identifying ideas" to which one must be attuned "are the classification of rhetorical discourse into forensic, deliberative and epideictic; the classification of 'proofs' or 'means of persuasion' into logical, pathetic, and ethical; the assessment of discourse in the categories of invention, arrangement, delivery, and style; and the evaluation of rhetorical discourse in terms of its effects on its immediate audience."[5]

Typical concerns and typical vocabulary exhibit a vitality in the pages of our journals, but there is an even earlier sign: the contributor. This is not to imply that riders never change horses, but most have favorite mounts they customarily ride through familiar terrain. Consequently, I have certain expectations as soon as I see that Loren Reid has written "Bright's Tributes to Garrison and Field"[6] and that Cal Logue has reported on "Gubernatorial Campaign in Georgia in 1880."[7] And for good or for ill, my expectations almost always are confirmed. Of course the very titles are suggestive, and so are others: "Exploitation of Ethos: Sarah Winnemucca and Bright Eyes on the Lecture Tour,"[8] "The Seventh of March Address: A Mediating Influence,"[9] "Rhetorical Strategies in the Courtrooms of Territorial Arkansas,"[10] "Lyndon Johnson and the 'Crisis' of Tonkin Gulf: A President's Justification of War."[11] Surely titles can be misleading, but when the colon is so common, the writer usually indicates when there will be a Burkean inquiry, an application of Toulman, a fantasy theme analysis, or some other point of departure. In the absence of an announced alternative, one expects traditional terms and bases when the object is the Convention Keynote by Dan Williams[12] or Barbara Jordan,[13] Bright as orator and teacher,[14] forensic oratory in Cicero's career,[15] rhetorical image-making,[16] or metaphors, whether archetypal or not.[17]

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[5] Black, p. 31.

[6] *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 61 (1975), 169-177.

[7] *Southern Speech Communication Journal*, 40 (1974), 12-32.

[8] Pat Creech Scholten, "Exploitation of Ethos: Sarah Winnemucca and Bright Eyes on the Lecture Tour," *Central States Speech Journal*, 41 (1977), 233-244.

[9] Paul Arntson and Craig R. Smith, "The Seventh of March Address: A Mediating Influence," *Southern Speech Communication Journal*, 40 (1975), 288-301.

[10] Stephen A. Smith, "Rhetorical Strategies in the Courtroom of Territorial Arkansas," *Southern Speech Communication Journal*, 42 (1977), 318-333.

[11] Richard A. Cherwitz, "Lyndon Johnson and the 'Crisis' of Tonkin Gulf: A President's Justification of War," *Western Journal of Speech Communication*, 42 (1977), 93-104.

Again the expectation is confirmed regularly. The critics may not exhaust the available topics, but neither did the contributors to *A History and Criticism of American Public Address*, and they ordinarily were looking to an entire career and had far more space than is granted in our journals. In any event, critics look to speakers and the effects of speech-making; they explore Evan's failure to adapt to multiple audiences in 1968[18] and Jordan's success in 1978,[19] analyze a Senate speech by Arthur Vandenburg,[20] explain the rhetorical dimensions of Nazi meetings in Germany.[21] Sometimes the inheritance is patent, as it is when one encounters a summary statement that includes "delivery, law, logic, language, strategy, invective, and pathos,"[22] or the contention that "the interaction of ethos and delivery with the message elements made the value appeals seem sincere."[23] In an article on Churchill, the primary emphasis is upon his delivery;[24] language use is central in an examination of the oral argument in the Bakke case;[25] arrangement and style are fundamental in a comparison between *Common Sense* and *Cato's Letters*.[26]

So we find the familiar steed rocking in a comfortable paddock, but there is change, and if the rock is not hard rock, there are touches of modernity, traces of new tack. Examples above include the examination of non-oratorical artifacts, and critics up-date their vocabulary. In the article about Churchill, it is not delivery that detains the critic; it is ''body-language.''[27] Even Reid talks about Bright's ''non-verbal'' communication and lists ''warmth, dynamism, charisma'' as elements in the speaker's ethos.[28] In another critique, ethos becomes image: ''The Presentation of Image in Ella T. Grasso's Campaign,'' the critic remarking, ''Image depends upon the projected impression of the personal character of the candidate.''[29] And if there is more in twentieth-century communication than is dreamed of in the *Rhetoric*, ethos as image plays an important part in an analysis of Wallace and the media in the Florida primary of 1972.[30]

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[12] Craig R. Smith, "The Republican Keynote Address of 1968: Adaptive Rhetoric for the Multiple Audience," *Western Journal of Speech Communication*, 39 (1975), 32-39.

[13] Wayne N. Thompson, "Barbara Jordan's Keynote Address: The Juxtaposition of Contradictory Values," *Southern Speech Communication Journal*, 44 (1979), 223-232.

[14] Loren Reid, "John Bright: The Orator as Teacher," *Southern Speech Communication Journal*, 41 (1975), 45-48.

[15] Richard Leo Enos, "Cicero's Forensic Oratory: The Manifestation of Power in the Roman Republic," *Southern Speech Communication Journal*, 40 (1975), 377-394.

[16] Thomas Clark, "Rhetorical Image-Making: A Case Study of the Thomas Paine-William Smith Debates," *Southern Speech Communication Journal*, 40 (1975), 248-261.

[17] William E. Richert, "Winston Churchill's Archetypal Metaphors: A Mythopoetic Translation of World War II," *Central States Speech Journal*, 28 (1977), 106-112; Hermann G. Stelzner, "Ford's War on Inflation: A Metaphor that Did Not Cross," *Communication Monographs*, 45 (1977), 284-297.

[18] Craig R. Smith, "The Republican Keynote Address of 1968."

[19] Thompson, "Barbara Jordan's Keynote Address."

[20] Richard B. Gregg, "A Rhetorical Re-examination of Arthur Vandenberg's 'Dramatic Conversion,' January 10, 1945," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 61 (1975), 154-168.

[21] Randall L. Bytwerk, "Rhetorical Aspects of the Nazi Meeting, 1926-1933," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 61 (1975), 307-318.

[22] Stephen A. Smith, 333.

[23] Thompson, 230.

[24] Manfred Weidhorn, "Churchill as Orator: Wish and Fulfillment," *Southern Speech Communication Journal*, 40 (1975), 217-227.

[25] Gayle Lewis Levison, "The Rhetoric of the Oral Argument in the Regents of the University of California V. Bakke," *Western Journal of Speech Communication*, 43 (1979), 271-277.

[26] Clark.

Critics have become even more adroit at transcending logos and pathos. Inductive and deductive processes clearly are passé, as are immediate emotional connections. Now one encounters tactics and strategies and appeals to cultural or societal values. On the surface it appears quite grand, and a reader might be inclined to believe that a lively mustang now is careening the range of criticism, but when the cosmic dust of the new terminology settles, what is really seen? Why, there is our little hobby-horse rocking, rocking, rocking. And even if I did not have the testimony that I do have from contributors, I would be led to suspect that the new vocabulary simply is a way to smuggle our pony past all those editors and reviewers, those critics of critics with their olefactory lobes always sensitive to any scent of decaying horse-flesh.

Note, too, that there are times when the tradition is presented in the yearling sales as the first foal of an entirely new breed. This has happened on more than one occasion with those riders who have climbed aboard the fantasy theme hobby. One example is to be found in Hensley's ''Rhetorical Vision and the Persuasion of a Historical Movement: The Disciples of Christ in Nineteenth Century American Culture.''[31] On the basis of one vision, the Disciples are millinarians;[32] in others they preach evangelization, unity, and restoration;[33] and among the fantasies are those ''in which Anglo-Saxons were superior to minority races.''[34] So the Disciples believed in and preached the millenium; along the way they developed three related lines of argument or appeals; they even capitalized on the myth of Anglo-Saxon superiority. It happens that Hensley's discussion strikes me as the product of an intelligent and contained mind, but I am convinced that the ground of argument is cumbered rather than clarified when all the old critical vocabulary is collapsed into "fantasy themes" and "rhetorical visions," the whole encompassed in dramatism.

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[27] Weidhorn.

[28] Reid, 56-57.

[29] Ardyce C. Whalen, ''The Presentation of Image in Ella T. Grasso's Campaign,'' *Central States Speech Journal*, 27 (1976), 207-208.

[30] Michael D. Murray, ''Wallace and the Media: The 1972 Florida Primary,'' *Southern Speech Communication Journal*, 40 (1975), 429-440.

[31] Carl Wayne Hensley, ''Rhetorical Vision and the Persuasion of a Historical Movement: The Disciples of Christ in Nineteenth Century America,'' *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 61 (1975), 250-264.

[32] Ibid., 252-264.

[33] Ibid., 255-258.

[34] Ibid., 261.

Another illustration appears in Kidd's "Happily Ever After and Other Relationship Styles: Advice on Interpersonal Relations in Popular Magazines, 1951-1973."[35] Although adducing no fantasy themes, she isolates two clusters of advice, each of which "included explanations for appropriate behavior in caring relationships, specific suggestions for face-to-face interaction, and provided readers modes of meaning in exchange between persons."[36] These clusters become visions. Now before Bormann published his original statement[37] and before she had been exposed to those notions, Kidd had executed a remarkably similar analysis of California textbooks.[38] She could not use visions then, and she really had no need for them later; once more the ground of an intelligent argument is clouded.[39]

Frost has his introspective New England farmer say, "Before I built a wall I'd ask to know / What I was walling in or walling out," and since fantasy theme critics wall everything in and nothing out, many do treat of topics far removed from traditional concerns and vocabulary. Nevertheless, there are those among them who seem to feel that to change brands is enough to turn a plater into a Spectacular Bid. Saying that, I surely offend both apprentices and trainer, but so be it. I would respond as Hamlet does when Gertrude complains that he has much offended her. I think, in fact, that many more of us should be much offended by the way any manner of critic has played fast and loose with the tradition. Whatever the point of departure and whether announced or not, too many have pretended that they knew not the horse, have pretended that they are virtuosos riding bareback on a show horse cavorting for the first time. They accomplish little, other than to imply that the old horse has been replaced by a more adventuresome steed, or to take self-satisfaction from the awareness that other riders are wearing the same colors. I will return to the pretense momentarily, but I have been trying to suggest that the vitality of the tradition in criticism is not all that vibrant, and it is time to turn directly to its moribund character.

For the five year run of publication in the journals and among the nine hundred articles printed, no more than fifty or sixty qualify as traditional critiques. That total obtains even when those horses decked out in novel trappings and tack are included, and a total of five or six percent smacks of the moribund. Worse, Black is right, after all, when he laments that the traditional "critic typically sees only one direction of movement: the background, training, interest, and aims of the rhetor influence his discourse which in turn influences the audience''[40] and when, after contending that this mode limits the conception of context, he complains that the approach ''substitutes historical reconstruction for re-creative criticism: and it limits judicial criticism to the evaluation of immediate effects.''[41] Though one may not go so far as to accept, without qualification, his contention that this ''mode of rhetorical criticism is profoundly mistaken,''[42] that mode certainly did not encourage the critic to explore speech texts intensely and extensively. That is another matter to which I shall return momentarily because the earlier misuse of traditional concepts and the current pretenses regarding them eventually coalesce. To some that coalescence might be most happily resolved by utter extinction, the hooves of that sullen beast stilled forever, with a ceremonial urn containing the ashes displayed at SCA headquarters.

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[35] Virginia Kidd, "Happily Ever After and Other Relationship Styles: Advice on Interpersonal Relations in Popular Magazines, 1951-1973," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 63 (1975), 31-39.

[36] Ibid., 32.

[37] Virginia Kidd, "The Rhetoric of the First Grade Reader," *Papers of the Conference in Rhetorical Criticism*, California State College, Hayward, California, 1970, pp. 7-10.

[38] Ernest G. Bormann, "Fantasy and Rhetorical Vision: The Rhetorical Criticism of Social Reality," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 58 (1972), 396-407.

[39] I admit to a marked dissatisfaction with the theoretical basis that Bormann uses in his program for criticism, but I do not think that dissatisfaction distorts my interpretation of the efforts by Hensley and Kidd. And it should be noted that Kidd's discussion is far from being a traditional critique; at the same time, it demonstrates the tendency to depart from conventional and useful terminology.

I have two objections to that denouement. First, Baskerville has a point when he queries, ''Must We All Be 'Rhetorical Critics'?''[43] We all do not have to be, and we can use rhetorical artifacts in a variety of ways. Whatever the role of education in introducing students to new ideas and to ways of dealing with them, the enterprise unquestionably has conservative dimensions. To preserve and continue the cultural heritage is a primary function, and speakers and speeches can tell us more than a little about Western Civilization, even when the Great Man theory has been abandoned. One can read speeches and study speakers without engaging in close critical analysis; they can be read and studied for ideas and their configurations in a given cultural milieu. If Wrage deserved some of the credit, Baskerville taught just such a course,[44] and though there is no criticism *per se* in *The People's Voice*,[45] that hardly detracts from the quality of the book. Many of us have been too often detained with the Old Dead Orators in quaint and archane ways, but that does not mean that a rhetorical orientation to history and biography cannot be a wholesome and stimulating venture.

I have a second objection to the demise of the tradition in criticism, and to me it is vastly more important. We do not all have to be critics, but when we set up shop for a critic, we ought to know what we are about, and the farther we get from traditional matters, the greater the danger that we will forever be Willy Lomans, never knowing who we are. The Renaissance humanists made some extremely nice and curious arguments, but they knew their rhetoric and knew it well. We in the twentieth century never have established a critical identity. What does it profit us to flee from logos and pathos and ethos to strategies and values and body language, particularly when we never adequately taught ourselves and our students what logos and pathos and ethos were within the texture of the critical enterprise?

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[40] Black, pp. 34-35.

[41] Ibid., p. 75.

[42] Ibid., p. viii.

[43] Barnet Baskerville, ''Must We All Be 'Rhetorical Critics'?'' *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 63 (1977), 107-116.

[44] I would rank it very high among the courses I took as a graduate student.

[45] Barnet Baskerville, *The People's Voice* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1979).

The Young Republicans who gathered at the Cooper Union Institute on the evening of February 27, 1860 surely did not stand around after Lincoln's performance and marvel among themselves about the logical bases in the first and most important movement in the speech. Nevertheless, the impact of the argument was noted and reported.[46] But suppose it had not, and suppose that Lincoln had returned to lasting obscurity in the West. His artistry remains, and if there are other profitable approaches to the text — as certainly there are — and if my co-author and I were phenomenologically naive in our analysis, I am satisfied that the uses we made of logical aspects helped explicate the text.[47]

That same co-author and I argued in a paper echoed above that in the aftermath of *Rhetorical Criticism*, critics have not done much more than achieve a nervous novelty and that "we now wander without system, without rigor, and without common points of reference, drifting farther and farther from a center that might hold together."[48] At the time, we were misunderstood because some thought we were contending that the old hobby-horse had to be resuscitated and ridden by all. That is not what we meant; that is not even what we said. We did not intend that time should be turned back four decades; we intended, instead, that critics return to common topics available in the rhetorical tradition and employ those topics to make close and careful inspection of rhetorical texts. That is something that rarely has been done, and we are convinced that the effort could well have a salutary influence upon criticism generally.

In the earlier uses of the tradition, the critic is a circuit rider, forever circling around and about the herd, but never getting into its center. Yet if this critic seldom takes us into the text of the speech and its workings, the pretense in the contemporary adaptations and departures is no more satisfying. The casual observer may see stunning performances on spirited mounts, the glories of the equestrian world, but a closer look cuts through the noise and glamour of the Big Top. The largest of the rings is small, and it is, after all, a ring, with horse and rider going round and round. I am put in mind of the Shetland pony rides at county fairs and local picnics during the thirties, the gelded ponies plodding wearily on their treadmill to oblivion. Despite any pretense, it has not changed much since Ehninger observed that traditional critics tend to "classify certain grosser properites cast under the heads of the traditional modes and canons" and to produce "a mechanical accounting or summing up of how well the speech fits an a priori mold."[49]

New molds for old is no answer, and there is no simple cure for our malaise. The tradition, as such, hardly offers a panacea, but its components at least derive directly from the practice of rhetoric, not from anthropology, sociology, Freudian psychology, the theatre, or some other source. Used with intelligence and imagination, the available topics may help us truly to understand and to appreciate the text and texture of messages. That will never happen, of course, until the effort is made, and in spite of the conventional wisdom, it never has been attempted with any sustained vigor and rigor.[50] Until that happens, our faithful hobby-horse will rock in ever-decreasing circles, regardless of its varied guises, and by naming the parts, critics will continue to pretend they have said something about how the parts work together.

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[46] See Chicago *Tribune*, March 1, 1860, p. 1. The article includes pertinent comments from both New York *Tribune* and New York *Evening Post* reports of the speech.

[47] Michael C. Leff and G. P. Mohrmann, "Lincoln at Cooper Union: A Rhetorical Analysis of the Text," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 60 (1974), 346-358.

[48] Michael C. Leff and G. P. Mohrmann, "Old Paths and New: A Fable for Critics," Speech Communication Association convention, Washington, D. C., 1977.

[49] Douglas Ehningher, "Rhetoric and the Critic," *Western Speech*, 29 (1965), 230.

Having started by doing violence to a great poem, I conclude in the same way. I would not suggest that rhetorical artifacts hold out the attractions that compare with those Herbert Reed fashions for his unhappy recruit, but I see some sense here, though I may lack sensibility.

NAMING OF PARTS

To-day we have naming of parts. Yesterday,
We had daily cleaning. And to-morrow morning,
We shall have what to do after firing. But to-day,
To-day we have naming of parts. Japonica
Glistens like coral in all of the neighboring gardens,
        And to-day we have naming of parts.

This is the lower sling swivel. And this
Is the upper sling swivel, whose use you will see,
When you are given your slings. And this is the piling swivel,
Which in your case you have not got. The branches
Hold in the gardens their silent, eloquent gestures,
        Which in our case we have not got.

This is the safety-catch, which is always released
With an easy flick of the thumb. And please do not let me
See anyone using his finger. You can do it quite easy
If you have any strength in your thumb. The blossoms
Are fragile and motionless, never letting anyone see
        Any of them using their finger.

And this you can see is the bolt. The purpose of this
Is to open the breech, as you see. We can slide it
Rapidly backwards and forwards: we call this
Easing the spring. And rapidly backwards and forwards
The early bees are assaulting and fumbling the flowers:
        They call it easing the Spring.

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[50] To quote again from the paper cited in note 48: "We used to study speeches, right? Wrong! How about Clay, Calhoun, and Webster for openers? A total of seventeen articles in national and regional journals, but no writer has seen fit to deal with the entire text of one of their speeches. Emerson? Eight articles, none on a particular speech. Jonathan Edwards? Not one article. Acres of Diamonds? No article. The New South? One, a Hegelian analysis. Abraham Lincoln? Thirty-two articles, but only if we are generous can we say that as many as three explore the rhetoric of a given speech."

They call it easing the Spring: it is perfectly easy
If you have any strength in your thumb: like the bolt,
And the breech, and the cocking-piece, and the point of balance,
Which in our case we have not got; and the almond-blossom
Silent in all of the gardens and the bees going backwards and forwards,
For today we have naming of parts.

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The Status of Movement Criticism

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The study of movements by rhetorical critics did not begin with Griffin's 1952 article "The Rhetoric of Historical Movement."[1] Braden's 1948 article on the "Lyceum Movement" is only one example of an earlier interest people in our field had in the social movement.[2] However, since Griffin's article there has been a fair amount of theorizing designed to clarify the definition, substance, and methodology of movement studies by rhetorical critics, and there has been, as would be expected, a fair amount of disagreement.[3] The primary purpose here is not to review these disagreements, but rather to look at a substantial and representative group of studies which were conceived by their authors, or perceived by others, as rhetorical studies of movements. From the actual practices of the critics it is hoped to show what movement studies are and provide a test for theory.

To avoid limiting the survey, the studies contained in three bibliographies were used, adding a few articles which seemed like obvious omissions.[4] Study was limited to published articles in national and regional journals and books by scholars in speech communication. Although many studies by sociologists and historians are useful to rhetorical critics, they were not included. Their inclusion would make such a survey ultimately less useful for our purpose of discovering what rhetorical critics do. Articles designed to theorize about movement criticism were included, but only the specific studies used as examples of the theory were considered. Thus, Cathcart's article, "New Approaches to the Study of Movements: Defining Movements Rhetorically," is not included, while Smith and Windes' reply to Cathcart, "The Innovational Movement: A Rhetorical Theory," is included because of its illustrative study of the Sunday School Movement.

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[1] Leland M. Griffin, "The Rhetoric of Historical Movements," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 38 (1952), 184-188.

[2] Waldo W. Braden, "The Lecture Movement: 1840-1860," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 34 (1948), 206-212.

[3] Robert Cathcart, "New Approaches to the Study of Movements: Defining Movements Rhetorically," *Western Speech*, 36 (1972), 82-22; Robert Cathcart, "Movements: Confrontation as Rhetorical Form," *Southern Speech Communication Journal*, 43 (1978), 233-247; S. Judson Crandell, "The Beginnings of a Methodology for Social Control Studies in Public Address," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 33 (1947), 36-39; James L. Golden and Richard D. Rieke, "The Uniqueness of Black Rhetoric," *The Rhetoric of Black Americans* (Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill, 1971), pp. 10-27; Leland Griffin, "The Rhetoric of Historical Movements" Leland Griffin "A Dramatistic Theory of the Rhetoric of Movements," *Critical Responses to Kenneth Burke*, ed. William H. Rueckert (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1969), pp. 456-477; Dan F. Hahn and Ruth M. Gonchar, "Studying Social Movements: A Rhetorical Methodology," *Speech Teacher*, 20 (1971), 44-52; Robert L. Heath, "Risk as a Dimension of Social Movement Vulnerability," *Communication Yearbook III*, ed. Dan Nimmo (New Brunswick, N.J.: International Communication Association, 1979), pp. 491-505; Anthony Hillbruner, "The Theory of the Avant-Garde: Some Topoi for the Study of Movements," *Central States Speech Journal*, 29 (1978), 251-262; Malcolm O. Sillars, "Rhetoric as Act," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 50 (1964), 277-284; Herbert Simons, "Changing Notions About Social Movements," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 62 (1976), 425-430; Herbert Simons, "Requirements, Problems and Strategies: A Theory of Persuasion of Social Movements," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 56 (1970), 1-11; Ralph R. Smith and Russel R. Windes, "Collective Action and the Single Text," *Southern Speech Communication Journal*, 43 (1978), 110-128; Ralph R. Smith and Russel R. Windes, "The Innovational Movement: A Rhetorical Theory," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 61 (1975), 140-153; Ralph R. Smith and Russel R. Windes, "The Rhetoric of Mobilization: Implications for the Study of Movements," *Southern Speech Communication Journal*, 42 (1976), pp. 1-19; Charles E. Wilkinson, "A Rhetorical Definition of Movements," *Central States Speech Journal*, 27 (1976), 84-94; David Zarefsky, "President Johnson's War on Poverty: The Rhetoric of Three 'Establisment' Movements," *Communication Monographs*, 44 (1977), 352-373.

Interest was in the movement study itself and little discretion was exercised either by definition or quality evaluation in order to establish a corpus of studies to examine. The sample used consisted of 101 published articles and books.

Of the 101 studies, twenty-nine might be questioned as movement studies by some readers. The authors of these studies were sent letters to find out how they defined their own studies. Twenty-three replies were received to these three questions: (1) Did you believe the study was a movement study when you did it? (2) Do you now believe it to be a movement study? (3) Briefly, why do you think it does or does not qualify?

Eleven of the twenty-three authors believed their studies were movement studies when they did them. Of the ten who did not consider their studies movement studies when they did them, six thought they would now define them as movement studies. (Two respondents did not directly respond to either of the first two questions.) Since the survey was sent to authors of studies which only marginally qualified as movement studies, the number of affirmative responses received was surprising. Only four of twenty-one respondents believed that their studies could not be classified as movement studies.

True, some authors found the question a little strange. Baskerville said, about his "The Cross and the Flag: Evangelists of the Far Right," "Your inquiry is a little like asking the early Brigance study authors if they thought they were writing Neo-Aristotelian studies. I imagine they would be puzzled, since Black had not yet coined that term. When I wrote 'The Cross and the Flag' seventeen years ago, I had never heard of a 'movement study.' "[5] Burgess said, "I've been among the most surprised by its ["The Rhetoric of Black Power: A Moral Demand"] inclusion; apparently some readers are 'wiser' than I!"[6] Yet most could find some basis on which their studies would qualify as movement studies.

For instance, Andrews said of his "The Practical Strategy: Richard Cobden's

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[4] We began with John Stewart's unpublished bibliography, "Social Movement Studies in the Field of Speech: 1950-1970," and Roger E. Masse's "Bibliography of Rhetorical Studies of Movements," *Rhetoric Society Quarterly*, 8 (1978), 129-138. To this were added a few articles which seemed to be obvious omissions. After we had completed the basic survey, John Stewart's 1979 bibliography was made available to us and we spot-checked to see if any of the material mentioned there and not included in our group of 101 might significantly change our survey. We concluded that it would not and decided to stay with the original sample of 101.

[5] Letter from Baskerville, 1979.

[6] Letter from Burgess, 1979.

Arbitration Speech of 1849" that he did not consider it a movement study at the time. However, as "the study of one speaker, at one instant, in the life of a movement . . . I think it qualifies as a study that contributes to the understanding of the rhetorical features of a particular movement when put in the *context* of that movement." Philip Wander, recognizing the current controversy over definition, said his article "The John Birch and Martin Luther King Symbols in the Radical Right" did not meet the definition since a movement study must treat the movement "as an object changing over time (Simons' work) . . . but as it [the study] moves to the inside of an actual, functioning movement, showing how people on the inside saw the world and the actions this vision implied, it definitely is a study of a real movement."[7] Clearly, then what counts as a movement study is broadly defined in practice, and probably more broadly defined at present than previously.

Within the broad definition implied by bibliographers and generally confirmed by the authors, there are a number of distinct types. Probably the most notable division comes between those studies which seek to describe a movement using a sweeping overview of an entire movement from beginning to end and those studies which are not concerned with characterizing a movement in an all-inclusive way; instead, a singular event, speaker, issue, or strategy is isolated and analyzed. For purposes of this discussion, the all-inclusive study which seeks characterization of the movement in its completeness is called a macroscopic movement study. Those studies which seek only to focus on a single element within a movement are classified as microscopic movement studies. Both macroscopic and microscopic studies may be further subclassified, thus producing the following *typology of movement studies:*

Macroscopic	
Macro-historical	(12)
Macro-rhetorical	(25)
Microscopic	
Single Event within a movement	(18)
Strategies within a movement	(16)
Speaker(s) within a movement	(14)
Single Issue within a movement	(14)
Comparison	(2)[8]

As mentioned, the macroscopic study is an attempt to look at the "wholeness" of a particular movement. Such studies often analyze the movement in chronological sequence. The macroscopic study may adhere closely to the guideline provided by Leland Griffin in 1952 when he defined a movement as follows: "When at some time in the past: (1) men have become dissatisfied with some aspect of their environment (2) they desire change — social, economic, political, religious, intellectual, or otherwise — and desiring change, they make efforts to alter their environment (3) eventually, their efforts result in some degree of success or failure; the desired change is or is not affected and we may say that the historical movement has come to its termination."[9]

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[7] Letter from Wander, 1979.

[8] The relation of this typology to Charles J. Stewart's in his unpublished 1970 paper "Twenty Years of Social Movement Studies in the Field of Speech," is interesting. ("Complete Movement Studies, Studies of a Single Leading Speaker in a Movement, Studies of the Speaking in a Movement, Studies of an Element(s) or Stage of a Movement, Studies of an Organization Involved in a Movement.")

At other times the macroscopic study will pay little attention to time or stages and focus on other matters; yet, the sense of the entire flow of the movement is always preserved.

There are basically two types of macroscopic studies. In the macro-historical study the author does not pay particular attention to an analysis of individual bits of rhetoric which grow out of the movement. The author, instead, lays out the development of a movement in terms of its history, most usually the history of its ideas. This line of inquiry might be said to be an interpretive intellectual history of what the author perceives to be a clearly bounded social movement. Some of the most obvious examples of such studies have grown out of the critical tradition of Wrage.[10] All but two of the studies in *Preaching in American History*, edited by Holland, and dedicated to Wrage, use this approach. Taylor's article "Preaching on Slavery 1831-1861" from this collection is a prototype of the macro-historical study.[11] Here, Taylor draws from his study of 100 sermons dealing with slavery. Yet, he is not concerned with their rhetorical strategies, the interrelation of the strategies, their effectiveness with audiences, their generic characteristics, and so forth. Rather, he seeks to examine only the evolution of ideas emerging within these speeches. His chronological development of ideology constitutes the intellectual history of a movement. Two additional studies, not from the Holland anthology, serve as further examples: Dick's "Negro Oratory in the Anti-Slavery Societies: 1830-1860" and Corts' "The Great Revival of 1800."[12]

The macro-rhetorical study focuses more specifically on the rhetorical analysis of messages. Erlich, in "Populist Rhetoric Reassessed: A Paradox," sketches the history of populism briefly and then evaluates its rhetoric by looking at what he considers its weaknesses and its strengths. It is evaluative, indicating not only what populist rhetoric was like but what parts of it meet his standards of positive and negative strategies.[13] Rosenwasser, unlike Erlich, uses Griffin's developmental approach. She examines the rhetorical strategies of women's liberation in three of the five stages she believes every movement must have. She explores examples of speeches, books and tracts of feminist literature to identify the rhetorical stages: "genesis and impetus, action and reaction, conversion and change, revision and solidification, success and silence."[14]

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[9] Griffin, "The Rhetoric of Historical Movements," 184.

[10] Ernest J. Wrage, "Public Address: A Study in Social and Intellectual History," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 33 (1947), 451-457.

[11] Hubert Vance Taylor, "Preaching on Slavery, 1831-1961," *Preaching in American History*, ed. De Witte Holland (Nashville: Abingdon Press: 1969), pp. 168-183.

[12] Robert C. Dick, "Negro Oratory in Anti-Slavery Societies: 1830-1860," *Western Speech* (1968), 5-14, and Thomas Corts, "The Great Revival of 1800," *Central States Speech Journal*, 18 (1967), 91-96.

[13] Howard S. Erlich, "Populist Rhetoric Reassessed: A Paradox," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 63 (1977), 140-151.

Microscopic studies explore a single element within a movement. By abandoning breadth, it is possible to study a single element in greater depth and to relate it to the movement as a whole. Microscopic studies center on single events, strategies, speakers, and issues. The studies surveyed appear to disperse quite evenly across these four categories, indicating no particular bias among critics toward one type of study or another. The first category includes those studies which deal with an examination of a single event considered to be a part of a movement. The "single event" study has focused on such events as a particular speech at a given occasion,[15] senate debates around a certain issue,[16] confrontation ridden situations and the rhetorical events which shaped them,[17] along with a television debate confronting the leader of a movement and her strongest adversary,[18] and the rhetoric at the national convention of a movement.[19] The "single event" studies rely on differing methods and theoretical stances; yet, each author sees merit in looking closely at one event among the many which make up a social movement.

The second sub-category of microscopic study is composed of those studies which focus on the analysis of one or a few rhetorical strategies which typify a movement. Two studies may stand as prototypes within this division, Powers' "Chicano Rhetoric: Some Basic Concepts" and Heath's "Dialectical Confrontation: A Study of Black Radicalism."

Powers identifies five "presuppositions" (feeling of oppression, *La Raza*, robbery of the conquered people, *Huelga* and *Áztlan*) which he considers basic to Chicano rhetoric. These "presuppositions" are illustrated through their strategic use. Heath in his article acknowledges that he is writing about rhetorical strategy.

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[14] Marie T. Rosenwasser, "Rhetoric and the Progress of Women's Liberation Movement," *Today's Speech*, 20 (1972), 45-56. For other examples of macro-rhetorical studies see, Carl Hensley, "Rhetorical Vision and the Persuasion of a Historical Movement: The Disciples of Christ in Nineteenth Century American Culture," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 62 (1973), 250-264; Keith Erickson, "Black Messiah: The Father Divine Peace Mission Movement," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 63 (1977), 428-438; Roderick P. Hart, "An Unquiet Desperation: Rhetorical Aspects of 'Popular' Atheism in the United States," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 64 (1978), 33-46; Malcolm O. Sillars, "The Rhetoric Of the Petition in Boots," *Speech Monographs*, 39 (1972), 92-104; Robert L. Scott and Wayne Brockriede, *The Rhetoric of Black Power* (New York: Harper and Row, 1969); Arthur L. Smith, *The Rhetoric of Black Power* (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1969).

[15] See Pat Jefferson, "The Magnificent Barbarian at Nashville (Carmichael)," *Southern Speech Communication Journal*, 33 (1967), 77-87; Karl W. Anatol and John R. Bittner, "Kennedy on King: The Rhetoric of Control," *Today's Speech*, 16 (1968), 31-34; James Andrews, "The Practical Strategy: Richard Cobden's Arbitration Speech of 1849," *Western Speech*, 32 (1968), 27-35.

[16] Ernest G. Bormann, "The Southern Senators' Filibuster on Civil Rights: Speech making as Parliamentary Strategem," *Southern Speech Communication Journal*, 27 (1962), 183-194, and David M. Jabusch, "The Rhetoric of Civil Rights," *Western Speech*, 30 (1966), 176-183.

[17] John H. Patton, "Rhetoric at Catonsville: Daniel Berrigan, Conscience and Image Alteration," *Today's Speech*, 23 (1975), 3-12, and Howard H. Martin, "The Rhetoric of Academic Protest," *Central States Speech Journal*, 17 (1966), 244-250.

[18] Lee Hudson, "Belting the Bible: Madalyn Murray O'Hair vs. Fundamentalism," *Western Speech*, 36 (1972), 233-240.

[19] Elizabeth M. Coughlin and Charles E. Coughlin, "Convention in Petticoats: The Seneca Falls Declaration of Women's Rights," *Today's Speech*, 21 (1973), 17-24.

He looks at "dialectical confrontation" as a special form of social conflict which is defined by the strategies of "redefinition," "transcendence," "formalization of the counter position" and "scapegoating." All are revealed, he argues, in the black radicalism of Malcolm X, Stokely Carmichael, and the Black Panthers.[20]

A third group of microscopic studies looks at individual speakers within a movement. Such studies may treat only one speaker in a social movement context; yet, the study of that speaker serves to illuminate the nature of the movement. Davies' "Ministry and Preaching," says Larson, exemplifies "uniquely the bi-directional thrust of evangelical agitation and illustrates the method of the New Light rhetoric."[21] Zacharis wishes to show in "Emmeline Pankhurst: An English Suffragette Influences America" how Mrs. Pankhurst contributed rhetorically to the Suffrage Movement as it began "a turn toward militance in 1903."[22] Other studies of this nature may be interested in two or more speakers associated with a movement. "Three Religious Orators and the Chartist Movement" by Lewis is an example of this multiple speaker treatment. Here, Lewis looks at three chartist orators, Joseph Raynor Stephens, Charles Kinsley, and Frederick W. Robertson, whose rhetoric "failed to divert or modify the main stream of chartist thought."[23]

Issues around which social movements turn provide a fourth area of microscopic study. In such a study the critic singles out one particular issue from a given movement for exploration. "Freedom of Speech and the New Left" by Rice, and Rossiter and McGaffey's response, are studies which focus on the "New Left" use or misuse of freedom of speech.[24]

Many of these studies identified here as issue-oriented may also be said to reveal the strategy as well, thus illustrating some of the problems of classification. For example, using the classification here, Wander shows how the persona of John Birch and of Martin Luther King are major issues in the rhetoric of the "Radical Right." With almost equal justification it may be said that Wander illustrates how the Birch and King symbols function as strategies for the movement.[25]

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[20] Lloyd D. Powers, "Chicano Rhetoric: Some Basic Concepts," *Southern Speech Communication Journal*, 38 (1973), 340-346; Robert L. Heath, "Dialectical Confrontation: A Strategy of Black Radicalism," *Central States Speech Journal*, 24 (1973), 168-177; for other examples of the microscopic-strategy category see: Herbert W. Simons, "Confrontation as a Pattern in University Settings," *Central States Speech Journal*, 20 (1969), 163-169; Gladys Ritchie, "The Sit-in: A Rhetoric of Human Action," *Today's Speech*, 18 (1970), 22-25; John Waite Bowers and Donovan J. Ochs, *The Rhetoric of Agitation and Control* (Reading, Massachusetts: Addison-Wesley, 1971).

[21] Barbara A. Larson, "Samuel Davies and the Rhetoric of the New Light," *Speech Monographs*, 38 (1971), 207-216.

[22] John C. Zacharis, "Emmeline Pankhurst: An English Suffragette Influences America," *Speech Monographs*, 38 (1971), 198-206. For other examples see Donald K. Orban, "Billy James Hargis: Auctioneer of Political Evangelism" *Central States Speech Journal*, 20 (1969), 83-91, and R. E. Davis, "Billy Sunday: Preacher Showman," *Southern Speech Communication Journal*, 32 (1966), 83-97.

[23] David W. Lewis, "Three Religious Orators and the Chartist Movements," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 43 (1957), p. 68. See also, Barnett Baskerville, "The Cross and the Flag: Evangelists of the Far Right," *Western Speech*, 27 (1963), 197-206.

[24] George P. Rice, Jr., "Freedom of Speech and the New Left," *Central States Speech Journal*, 21 (1970), 139-145; Charles M. Rossiter, Jr. and Ruth McGaffey, "Freedom of Speech and the 'New Left': A Response," *Central States Speech Journal*, 22 (1971), 5-10.

The macro-rhetorical study probably satisfies most theorists and critics as the basic form of the movement study. It tries to see the whole movement and it uses the rhetoric as a core of the analysis. Yet, this very focus on the analysis of individual pieces of rhetoric in order to understand a movement is the source of its own greatest weakness.

To accomplish an in-depth analysis of the rhetoric over a period of time requires not only extensive research but extensive explanation. A complete analysis probably requires a book-length study. It is understandable, therefore, that article writers would choose to be microscopic. Every critic must make assumptions and hope that the reader will grant them. The critic of a movement must make even more assumptions than other critics because of the breadth of the study. These problems are so severe that they surface even in microscopic studies. For example, Larson is forced to assume that her readers will grant that Samuel Davies represented the New Light Theology.[26] If the reader will not grant that assumption, her study becomes an interesting analysis of the rhetoric of a single person but it is not the study of a movement. But a proof of her assumption would require an analysis of the rhetoric of the major preachers of the movement with some attention to opposing points of view, before she ever got to a careful analysis of Davies' rhetoric.

Some studies, while they are macroscopic in approach, cover only a phase of what might potentially be seen as the movement. Olbricht's study of the rise of Unitarianism is a case in point.[27] An examination of Unitarianism from the early nineteenth century to today could lead to shallow analysis or obscure the main point of that analysis. Thus, though the full macroscopic study would seem, on the first examination, to be the paradigm of the movement study, it poses the dilemma of scope versus depth. That dilemma makes microscopic movement studies quite as acceptable as macroscopic.[28]

When only two examples emerge, it is difficult to make a case for a category. However, the idea of using rhetorical criticism to compare two movements on a point of joint interest seems worthwhile. Hope's "Redefinition of Self: A Comparison of the Rhetoric of the Women's Liberation and Black Liberation Movements" seeks to uncover similar and different rhetorical strategies used in "redefinition of self" by black liberation and women's liberation.[29] Scott's article on the conservative voice in radical rhetoric is not specifically intended as a comparison study; yet in actual application it compares several radical movements to discover similar strategies.[30] It is surprising that so few comparison studies exist. This clearly seems like an attractive area for future research.

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[25] Philip C. Wander, "The John Birch and the Martin Luther King Symbols in the Radical Right," *Western Speech*, 35 (1971), 4-14.

[26] Larson, 207-216. Even though five times longer, her bicentennial monograph, *Prologue to Revolution: The War Sermons of the Reverend Samuel Davies* (Falls Church, VA: Speech Communication Association, 1978), has the same problem.

[27] Thomas Olbricht, "The Rise of Unitarianism in America," *Preaching in American History*, pp. 118-134.

[28] The case has been made for viewing a movement through specific representative texts (Smith and Windes, "Collective Action and the Single Text") and for examining all single events as part of a movement (Sillars, "Rhetoric as Act," 281-282). Griffin, clearly a proponent of macroscopic studies, recognized the problem and urged that the critic take "the briefest historical movement he can find" ("The Rhetoric of Historical Movements," 185).

[29] Diane Schaich Hope, "Redefinition of Self: A Comparison of the Women's Liberation and Black Liberation Movements," *Today's Speech*, 23 (1975), 17-26.

Concurrent with the increased number of movement studies there has been an increase in theorizing about what a movement study is or should be. To what extent have the writings on movement theory influenced the critics? Seventeen of the studies surveyed make extensive use of the theory. Twelve make reference to one or two theory articles, but these references do not seem to have much effect on the critic's analysis. Seventy-two make no mention of theory at all. This number appears inordinately large. True, some of the studies included in this survey were published before the "movement study" as such became an object of theoretical interest and, even with a liberal interpretation of what a movement study is, many would argue that the bibliographers have included some studies which are not movement studies. Bradley and Tarver make no claim that their analysis of "John C. Calhoun's Argumentation in Defense of Slavery" is a movement study.[31] Nor does Asante consider his "Television and Black Consciousness" a movement study.[32] While it is understandable how a bibliographer might perceive these articles as throwing some light on the anti-slavery or civil rights movements and, therefore, regard them as movement studies, it is also understandable why the authors cite no movement theory. Nonetheless, 72 of 101 is an inordinately large number. When taken together with the other twelve who make only a passing reference to movement theory (such as a single reference to a definition by Griffin or Cathcart) it would appear that rhetorical critics, to this point, have largely ignored established movement theory.

Furthermore, of the seventeen studies which made significant use of theory, seven were designed to develop movement theory with a movement study included only as an illustration of that theory.[33] Of the ten remaining studies which were designed primarily as studies of movements, not as theory pieces, only four make significant use of the theoretical literature on the nature of movement studies. In addition seven studies make extensive use of theoretical statements not specifically associated with movement theory.[34] These base their analysis on theories of such writers as Ernest Bormann, Lloyd Bitzer, or Kenneth Burke.[35]

This is not to say that the critics follow no critical system. Indeed, the next section of this paper which also centers on methodology shows that they do. But the critics are not paying much attention to theoretical writings on the nature and criticism of movements. There is, as has been pointed out, little attention paid to movement theory by those critics who set out to study a movement. The few critics who claim a dependence on theory are as likely to claim dependence on general rhetorical theory as they are on the literature of the rhetorical theory of movements. That might mean that there are serious weaknesses in the applied rhetorical criticism of movements where the critics spin off in all directions without a solid theoretical base. On the other hand, it may be observed that a theory which is seldom used is not very useful. Perhaps the theorists would do well to pay more attention to actual practice and less to their own private arguments about definitions and methodologies.

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[30] Robert L. Scott, "The Conservative Voice in Radical Rhetoric: A Common Response to Division," *Communication Monographs*, 40 (1973), 123-35.

[31] Bert E. Bradley and Jerry L. Tarver, "John C. Calhoun's Argumentation in Defense of Slavery," *Southern Speech Communication Journal*, 35 (1969), 163-175.

[32] Arthur L. Smith (Molefi K. Asante), "Television and Black Consciousness," *Journal of Communication*, 26 (1976), 137-141. Letter from Molefi K. Asante, 1979.

[33] See for instance: J. Robert Cox, "Perspectives on Rhetorical Criticism of Movements: Antiwar Dissent, 1964-1970," *Western Speech*, 38 (1974), 254-268; Smith and Windes, "The Innovational Movement: A Rhetorical Theory"; Zarefsky, "President Johnson's War on Poverty: The Rhetoric of Three 'Establishment' Movements."

[34] One article appeared in two categories.

[35] See: Hensley; Cox; Karlyn Kohrs Campbell, "The Rhetoric of Radical Black Nationalism: A Case Study in Self-Conscious Criticism," *Central States Speech Journal*, 22 (1971), 151-160.

One caution might be invoked before drawing such a conclusion. Most references to theory of any kind are made in the macroscopic-rhetorical studies which would be most clearly identifiable as movement studies. It may be argued that clearer definitions of what a rhetorical movement study is are needed, inasmuch as loose definitions could mean that almost any rhetorical analysis might be conceptualized as a movement study, if in some way, even tangentially, it brushes a social movement. Is some definition needed which will limit the scope for practical purposes, if for no other reason?

Be that as it may, it seems that at present the area of rhetorical movement study has no all-encompassing definition or other theoretical underpinning. In general, beyond rather minor mention of certain definitions, research in the area appears to have directed little attention to theoretical concerns. Thus, at the present time, theory and practice appear to be separate. Each has had little direct effect on the other.

Critics do not reveal their critical systems in their dependence on movement theory *per se* but in the distinctive methodological approaches taken in the studies sampled. In the following classification of *methodological approaches* (some of the categories may seem less like methodology than a purist would like) the categories and the number in each category are revealing.

Neo-Aristotelian	53
Historical-Interpretive	33
Dramatistic	7
Generic	2
Fantasy-theme Analysis	2
Aesthetic Analysis	2
Value Analysis	1
Editorial	1

Various forms of the neo-Aristotelian approach have been employed more frequently than any other critical approach. Of the literature surveyed, fifty-three studies, more than half, take an "effects" oriented stance, almost twice the number of studies in the next largest category, "historical-interpretive." Many of the pieces dealing with single speakers in a movement, for example, assess audience response to a particular speaker and perhaps that speaker's subsequent impact upon the movement as a whole. The previously mentioned study of Pankhurst along with Hammerback's study of George Washington Julian are illustrations of this kind of a study.[36] Studies of a single event which use neo-Aristotelian oriented criticism may look at the effects of a particular "sit-in," or a particular anti-war effort growing up in a given location or even a particular neo-Aristotelian proof such as *ethos*. One study which was identified as neo-Aristotelian uses what the author, Hudson, termed a "heuristic criticism" which "describes a speaking event in terms of the dynamics between the speaker and his immediate audience."[37]

Studies which adopt an historical-interpretive approach frequently take an intellectual history approach, as when Clark identifies the ideologies which characterize the vision of the London Theosophical Movement. Sometimes they describe the activities of a particular group such as "Black Persuaders in the Anti-Slavery Movement," or they describe a particular phenomenon such as the "Rhetorical Ridicule of Reconstruction Blacks."[38] Again, many of the studies included in Holland's anthology, *Preaching in American History*, clearly fall into this category.[39]

The authors of "dramatistic" studies use analytical techniques growing out of Burkeian criticism. Some like Elizabeth and Charles Coughlin in their study of the Seneca Falls Women's Rights Convention are influenced by Cathcart's conception that a movement is a dramatic confrontation which possesses "tokens, symbols, and transactions which unite or separate people who organize to produce change."[40] Others, like Patton in his study of Daniel Barrigan, draw their methodological base directly from Kenneth Burke.

Although generic criticism is old stuff to literary critics it is relatively new to critics from our field. It is represented by such studies as Campbell's "The Rhetoric of Women's Liberation: An Oxymoron" in which she argues that "the rhetoric of women's liberation is a distinctive genre because it evinces unique *rhetorical* qualities that are a fusion of substantive and stylistic features."[41] Because it is a relatively recent addition to the methodological "stable" it is understandable that so few examples of it would be found in the sample of critical studies. A similar observation can be made about fantasy-theme analysis which had few examples. One such example is the previously mentioned study by Hansley of the Disciples of Christ movement. In it he seeks to develop, from an examination of the rhetoric of some major leaders, the vision of the millennium and the major themes which relate to it.

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[36] Zacharis, 198-206, and John C. Hammerback, "The Rhetoric of Righteous Reform: George Washington Julian's 1852 Campaign Against Slavery," *Central States Speech Journal*, 22 (1971), 85-93.

[37] Thomas W. Benson, and Bonnie Johnson, "The Rhetoric of Resistance: Confrontation with the Warmakers," *Today's Speech*, 16 (1968), 35-42; Martin; James R. Andrews, "The Ethos of Pacifism: The Problem Image in the Early British Peace Movement," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 53 (1967), 28-33; Lee Hudson.

[38] Thomas D. Clark, "Rhetoric, Reality, and Realization: A Study of the Masking Function of Rhetoric in the London Theosophical Movement," *Communication Quarterly*, 26 (1978), 24-30; Patrick C. Kennicott, "Black Persuaders in the Anti-Slavery Movement," *Speech Monographs*, 37 (1970), 15-24; Cal M. Logue, "Rhetorical Ridicule of Reconstruction Blacks," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 62 (1976), 400-409.

[39] See John W. Carlton, "The Ecumenical Movement," *Preaching in American History*, pp. 292-309; Harold Brock, "Neo-Orthodoxy and the American Pulpit," *Preaching in American History*, pp. 278-291.

[40] Coughlin and Coughlin; Cathcart, "New Approaches to the Study of Movements: Defining Movements Rhetorically," 86.

[41] Karlyn Kohrs Campbell, "The Rhetoric of Women's Liberation: An Oxymoron," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 59 (1973), 74-86.

What is termed "aesthetic analysis" here consisted of two studies which primarily looked at speaker style and explained or judged it by aesthetic standards.[42]

Clearly, the authors of movement studies have adopted older and more firmly established critical approaches (i.e., neo-Aristotelian and historical-interpretive) more than other methodological approaches. This is understandable inasmuch as such methodological approaches as dramatistic, generic, and fantasy-theme have been with rhetorical scholars a relatively short period of time and are clearly less entrenched. It might be argued that the trend appears to be toward an ever-increasing willingness to experiment with a wide variety of recently formulated methodological approaches. But, it could also be argued that the more stabilized approaches die hard, to say the least, and it is not yet time to scatter flowers on their graves.

While methodology may be mostly traditional, the subject matter is not. The subject matter emphasis of the critical studies calls attention to one of the controversies in the theoretical literature. Writers such as Cathcart and Simons argue that a movement study is limited to a phenomenon which "can be identified by its confrontational form" or to groups which are "noninstitutionalized collectivities that promote or resist social change from the 'bottom up.' "[43] Broadly understood, such a point of view limits the definition of movements to that which is perceived as a noninstitutionalized attack on the status quo. Such a limitation, say others, has negative consequences because it rules out other phenomena and may be merely "a preoccupation with events which dominated the public mind during a brief era."[44]

It is not the intention here to speculate on what led Griffin, or Cathcart, or Simons to establish their definitions, but there is no question that the studies examined show a clear prejudice for the "establishment-conflict" point of view. They reveal the strong influence of the period and the location of their authors. Only seven of the studies are about non-American subjects and all of those are British. Although Stewart's 1979 bibliography (see footnote 4) includes several studies of Hitler, that does little to change the contemporary American bias of movement studies. Almost a third of the studies in the survey are on the civil rights movement of the recent past. The second largest group are on other contemporary movements such as women's rights, anti-war, student rights and gay liberation. Only a third deal with American subjects before 1960 and of those a third are on

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[42] Pat Jefferson, "Stokely's Cool Style," *Today's Speech*, 16 (1968), 19-24; Larry S. Richardson, "Stokely Carmichael: Jazz Artist," *Western Speech*, 34 (1970), 212-218.

[43] Cathcart, "Movements: Confrontation as Rhetorical Form," p. 235; Herbert W. Simons, Elizabeth Mechling and Howard N. Schreiner, "Mobilizing for Collective Action from the Bottom Up: The Rhetoric of Social Movements," unpublished manuscript, 1979, 2.

[44] Smith and Windes, "The Innovational Movement: A Rhetorical Theory," 142.

Black rhetoric. It seems reasonable to conclude that the studies have been strongly influenced by the authors' experiences with contemporary social protest. Religion, both contemporary and historical, has provided a second influence. Setting aside this religious interest it is clear that most movement studies begin with the critic's interest in contemporary anti-establishment rhetoric or its historical antecedent.

A second, and probably more consistent, controversy in theory is not reflected in the critical practices. The issue is a complex one but perhaps most directly stated by McGee when he argues "that 'movement' is not a phenomenon but an interpretation." He takes Simons as his opponent when he charges that Simons "pretends that there is a near-consensus that 'movement' is a phenomenon."[45] Unfortunately, the present study of movement criticism throws no light on this controversy. The critic who examines the rhetoric of a movement does not reveal concern for the issue. Whether the critic believes that a movement is an interpretation or a phenomenon is not important to the study or, perhaps it would be better to say, it is not revealed in the study. While Griffin specifically bases his study of the Antimasonic Movement on his earlier theory article and, thus, clearly indicates that he sees a movement as a phenomenon, few other studies are so easy to classify.[46] For instance, "The Rhetoric of the Petition in Boots," a study of the Coxey Army Movement mentioned previously, gives no indication that its author regards movement as an interpretation and not a phenomenon. McGee would argue that his article on the fall of Wellington (not included in this survey) illustrates the principle that movements are interpretations, but no movement studies were found in this survey which clearly indicate that point of view.[47]

What all this may mean is that there is a real problem with the point of view espoused by McGee and others. While that view may have theoretical usefulness, it does not have usefulness for the critic. Its relation to criticism needs to be developed. Otherwise, it is a distinction without a difference.

A third area of theoretical controversy centers around whether the movement (phenomenon or interpretation) is to be defined by general historical or sociological means or whether it is to be defined "rhetorically." Here again, there seems to be a problem in assessing the significance of an historical as opposed to a rhetorical definition of the movement.

Some studies make far more extensive use of specific rhetoric than do others but this distinction throws little light on the question of how the movement is defined. The only way a reader can know whether or not the critic believes the rhetoric is simply an artifact of the movement or actually its defining force is if the critic tells the reader. Few do. Therefore, from a practical standpoint, such theorizing constitutes another distinction without a difference.

What then, after all, can be concluded about the actual practice of movement criticism? First, it seems unequivocally clear that rhetorical critics are not in agreement about how a movement study is to be defined. Individual perceptions about what constitutes the rhetorical movement study appear to range from a close look at small bits of an historical phenomenon, such as the function of the "sit-in" during the early stirrings of student unrest, to studies which attempt a much broader overview of a clearly bounded and identifiable social act, having something close to an "inception, crisis, and consummation." Wilkinson's statement regarding sociological movement studies applies equally well to rhetorical movement studies: "The problem is that the term 'movement' has become all things to all men."[48]

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[45] Michael C. McGee, "The Problem of So-Called 'Movement Theory': A Position Paper," unpublished manuscript, 1979, 1-2.

[46] Griffin, "The Rhetorical Structure of the Antimasonic Movement"; Griffin, "The Rhetoric of Historical Movements."

[47] Michael C. McGee, "The Fall of Wellington: A Case of the Relationship Between Theory, Practice and Rhetoric in History," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 63 (1977), 28-42.

Furthermore, critics clearly appear to share no overriding theoretical framework within which they carry out their analyses. Indeed, they seem generally unresponsive to such theorizing. Apart from a few references to such writers as Griffin and Cathcart, critics show little concern for the theoretical undergirding of movement studies. Some recent studies seek to develop new theoretical directions for rhetorical study, but these are few and far between and have not, at least to date, provided directions critics care to follow.

Perhaps because of the lack of agreement on definition and theoretical underpinning, movement studies have ranged from macroscopic all-encompassing examinations of movements to microscopic attempts which look in depth at particular elements of the movement. Rhetorical criticism ranging from "The Structure of the Antimasonic Movement" to "Gayspeak"[49] have been classified by bibliographers and critics as part of a growing body of movement literature.

Similarly, a wide array of methodological approaches have been incorporated under the movement study banner. Neo-Aristotelian and historical-interpretive approaches appear most often. A few recent studies use new, previously untried directions. How influential or worthwhile these approaches may be remains to be seen.

In retrospect, the rhetorical movement study appears to be in an undifferentiated and near infant stage, pushing out, although hesitantly, in new directions. While many writers on theory seek explicit definition and search for the limit of its range of application, the critics are not so constrained. That is not to say that the studies which have been done lack valuable insights, are shallow, or show no concern for systematic analysis. Many represent a careful assembly and analysis of much data, from which clear and useful conclusions are drawn.

But the question must be asked, "is there no limit to what can be claimed as a movement study?" Is it the theorists who lack credibility because they do not show how the questions which concern them have any real significance to the perceptive critic? Or, do critics need to agree on some limitation to the nature of movement studies lest the term become meaningless?

At the moment, it would seem, there is no such thing as a movement study. What are currently called movement studies represent no clear definition, form or methodology. At the moment a study is a movement study when its author or reader finds it useful to so identify it. And the theorists, like the *Academie francaise* in its attempts to preserve the purity of the French language, had better pay more attention to what is going on in the provinces.

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[48] Paul Wilkinson, *Social Movement* (New York: Praeger, 1971), p. 15.

[49] Joseph J. Hayes, "Gayspeak," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 62 (1976), 256-266.

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Genre: Concepts and Applications in Rhetorical Criticism

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One could as well avoid the name of Aristotle in tracing the history of rhetoric as neglect a reference to Herbert A. Wichelns in an essay reviewing a significant aspect of twentieth century rhetorical criticism. The contribution of Wichelns' 1925 essay "The Literary Criticism of Oratory"[1] is well summarized by Bryant:

> [It] set the major direction of critical thought about speeches and speaking for the succeeding decades even to the edge of this moment. Perhaps it did not introduce the term *rhetorical* criticism into working practice as the counterpart of literary criticism, but it certainly launched the term on a persistent career. That essay, a criticism and a corrective to prevailing practice, reestablished oratory in parallel status with literature as substance for criticism, and it distinguished a concept of criticism appropriate to each. Wichelns' focus upon the criticism of oratory, upon the generic basis for critical distinction, tended to identify rhetoric with speaking, and rhetorical criticism with the criticism of speeches (oratory). The essay thus provided the student of speeches and speaking with a criticism all his own, coordinate with literary criticism, and with a genre, *oratory* (public address), to which that criticism is appropriate.[2]

The concept of that genre has shifted over the years and, correspondingly, so have ideas of the proper perspective on rhetorical criticism.

A complete history of the evolution of these concepts and ideas is not included here. It is relevant, and perhaps instructive, however, to note certain highlights in the movement from the thinking of Wichelns to those who follow the insights of Kenneth Burke. Deeply indebted to the blueprint drawn by Wichelns, Thonssen and Baird published an article in 1947, "Methodology in the Criticism of Public Address,"[3] which prefigured their profoundly influential book, *Speech Criticism: The Development of Standards of Rhetorical Appraisal*.[4] Their conception of speech as discourse composed of proofs and appeals, and their position on the role of the rhetorical critic as an evaluator of effects came to dominate rhetorical criticism. A speech was considered a catalyst in the making of history and the rhetorical critic was necessarily involved in assessments of cause and effect.

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[1] In *Studies in Honor of James A. Winans*, ed., A. H. Drummond (New York: Century, 1925), pp. 181-216.

[2] Donald C. Bryant, "Rhetorical Dimensions in Criticism," in *Rhetorical Dimensions of Criticism* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1973), pp. 27-28.

[3] Lester Thonssen and A. Craig Baird, "Methology in the Criticism of Public Address," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 33 (April 1947), 134-138. For an analysis of the relationship between Wichelns' essay and the work of Thonssen and Baird, see Walter R. Fisher, "Method in Rhetorical Criticism," *Southern Speech Journal*, 35 (Winter 1969), 103.

[4] (New York: Ronald Press, 1948). A second edition appeared in 1970 with Waldo W. Braden as co-author.

Another important moment in the evolution of thinking about the nature of public address and the role of the rhetorical critic was the publication of Ernest Wrage's “Public Address: A Study in Social and Intellectual History.”[5] The thesis of this essay was “that students of public address may contribute in substantial ways to the history of ideas.”[6] Thus speeches were conceived as “documents in social history”[7] and the rhetorical critic or analyst was an intellectual historian, an observer of “themes and their elaborations from which we may gain insight into the life of an era as well as into the mind of a man.”[8]

The publication of Edwin Black's *Rhetorical Criticism: A Study in Method* in 1965 marks another turning point in critical thought.[9] In a sense, it brings this discussion full circle, since Black dedicated his book to Wichelns, his mentor, and his principal concern was the conception of discourse implicit in the prevailing mode of criticism, which he labeled “neo-Aristotelian.” Specifically, he charged that “neo-Aristotelism understands historical context in a particular and delimited way, and that this understanding, in turn, delimits and particularizes the range of expressive intents that neo-Aristotelism would ascribe to a rhetorical discourse.”[10] His alternative to this condition was to insist on a broader view of rhetorical significance, one might represent it as that of the cultural or literary historian, and to offer an expansion of thinking about genre. In addition to an exploration of the argumentative genre, he proposed consideration of exhortation as a species of rhetorical discourse. It was this exploration and proposal which gave rise, in my judgment, to the current interest and activity in generic criticism in rhetorical scholarship.[11]

Before examining this scholarship, which is the focus of this essay, it is essential that one more significant influence on thinking about rhetorical discourse and criticism be noted — that of Kenneth Burke. The appearance of *A Rhetoric of Motives* in 1950 may be said to have revolutionized the conception of what is rhetorical, in that rhetoric was not viewed as a form of discourse but as a function of symbols, the function of inducement.[12] Rhetoric could be found to operate not only in speech, essay, poem, play, novel, or film, but also in music, architecture, dress, ceremony, dance, and ritual. Where there is meaning, Burke wrote, there is persuasion.[13] And by persuasion Burke meant identification, a process that includes unconscious as well as conscious responses to symbols. The rhetorical critic or analyst who follows his lead concentrates on modes by which people are moved by “signs of consubstantiation.” Burke's thought has broadened and deepened rhetorical inquiry and there is every indication that it will continue to have a profound impact.[14]

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[5] *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 33 (December 1947), 451-457.

[6] Ibid., p. 453.

[7] Ibid., p. 455.

[8] Ibid., pp. 455-456.

[9] (New York: Macmillan, 1965). The University of Wisconsin Press reissued the book in 1978.

[10] Ibid., p. 42.

[11] E. D. Hirsch, Jr., credits the “ ‘Chicagoans,’ ” such writers as R. S. Crane, Elder Olson, Richard McKeon, and Bernard Weinburg with formulating the “genre theory of evaluation”; see *The Aims of Interpretation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976), p. 118.

[12] (New York: Prentice Hall, 1950), pp. 19-46. See also by Burke: “Rhetoric — Old and New,” *The Journal of General Education*, 5 (April 1951), 202-209; and “The Rhetorical Situation,” in *Communication: Ethical and Moral Issues*, ed., Lee Thayer (London: Gordon and Beach, 1973), pp. 263-275.

[13] Burke, *Rhetoric*, p. 172.

If there is a lesson to be learned from the progression of critical ideas in the writings of Wichelns, Thonssen and Baird, Wrage, Black, and Burke, it is that generic concepts, whether in regard to the nature or to the forms of rhetorical discourse, determine the character of specific acts of criticism. As the critic conceives an object of criticism, so will he or she assess it. If a speech is defined as a deliberative address composed of ethos, pathos, and pistis, the critic will see and appraise these modes of proof. And if rhetorical acts are viewed as attempts at identification, this will be what is evaluated. An uncritical approach to genre, in other words, is tantamount to uncritical criticism.

This brief survey is meant to provide a context for what follows. The specific purpose is to explore four questions, questions that appear to be central to the present concern about generic criticism: what is a genre? how are genres constituted? how are genres manifested in specific rhetorical criticisms? and what are the ways in which genres contribute to the tasks of rhetorical criticism, to the illumination of the working and worth of rhetorical acts and artifacts?[15] No criticism is intended of those who view themselves as generic critics. By the time the questions are answered, however, it should be evident where particular works fitting into the universe of rhetorical criticism are seen. There is a sense in which this paper is itself an example of genre criticism: it specifies categories of discourse, places works within the categories, and the result is a more-or-less predetermined assessment. These features may be considered conventions of the "state of the art" genre.

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[14] The transforming power of Burke's work may be seen by comparing Leland M. Griffin's two essays on the rhetoric of historical movements: “The Rhetoric of Historical Movements,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 38 (April 1952), 184-188, and “A Dramatic Theory of the Rhetoric of Movements,” in *Critical Responses to Kenneth Burke, 1924-1966*, ed., William H. Rueckert (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1969), pp. 456-478.

[15] Others have dealt with these or similar questions and should be noted — most importantly, those who planned and participated in the 1976 conference on “ ‘Significant Form’ in Rhetorical Criticism.” Sponsored by the Research Board of the Speech Communication Association, the conference was held at the University of Kansas. The meeting and its proceedings may be considered another significant moment in the contemporary history of genre criticism. Karlyn Kohrs Campbell and Kathleen Hall Jamieson eds., *Form and Genre: Shaping Rhetorical Action* (Falls Church, Virginia: Speech Communication Association, n.d.). In addition to this collection of essays, see also: Jackson Harrell and Wil A. Linkugel, “On Rhetorical Genre: An Organizing Principle,” *Philosophy and Rhetoric*, 11 (Fall 1978), 262-281; Kathleen M. Hall Jamieson, “Generic Constraints and the Rhetorical Situation,” *Philosophy and Rhetoric*, 6 (Summer 1973), 162-170; Kathleen Jamieson, “Antecedent Genre as Rhetorical Constraint,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 61 (December 1975), 406; G. P. Mohrmann and Michael Leff, “Lincoln at Cooper Union: A Rationale for Neo-Classical Criticism,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 60 (December 1974), 459-467. For relevant studies in literature, see: Northrop Frye, *Anatomy of Criticism: Four Essays* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957), esp. “Rhetorical Criticism: Theory of Genres,” pp. 243-337; Paul Hernadi, *Beyond Genre: New Directions in Literary Classification* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1972); Earl Miner, “On the Genesis and Development of Literary Systems, Part I,” *Critical Inquiry*, 5 (Winter 1978), 339-353; Part II appears in 5 (Spring 1979), pp. 553-568; Bruce Morrisette, “Post-Modern Generative Fiction: Novel and Film,” *Critical Inquiry*, 2 (Winter 1975), 253-260. Useful studies of film genre include: Barry K. Grant, *Film Genre: Theory and Criticism* (Metuchin, New Jersey: Scarecrow Press, 1977); Bruce Gronbeck, “Celluloid Rhetoric: On Genres of Documentary,” in *Form and Genre*, pp. 139-161; and Stuart M. Kaminsky, *American Film Genre: Approaches to a Critical Theory of Popular Film* (Dayton, Ohio: Pflaum, 1974).

My response to the first question, what is a genre, is simple and straightforward: *a genre is a category*. Although genre is used to specify categories in music and painting, concern here is with essentially linguistic modes of interaction, hence concentration is on conceptualizations of language forms. The most important fact about genre is that *genres are generalizations*. As such they are both true and false. They are not natural objects like animals, vegetables, or minerals. They are made by humans out of the mind's penchant for observing similarities and differences in things, to provide order to understanding. All instances of discourse are alike in being discourse and all instances of discourse are different in being the creation of different people in different times and different places.

A genre is an Aristotelian, not a Platonic construct. Genres are constituted through an examination of actual instances of discourse. They are inductive generalizations, not dialectically apprehended noumenal forms. One can deduce from a genre that given rhetorical acts should exhibit particular conventions, but one cannot deductively produce the genre itself. There is a difference, in other words, between arguing that a rhetorical artifact is a model of excellence, which is a deductive process, and creating a species of rhetorical acts, which is an inductive process. The former is a mode of criticism; the later is a process of theory-building, of genre making. There can be no genre including one of a kind — by definition.

The argument that a speech, such as Socrates' "Apology," is evidence that a genre can be deductively derived is erroneous.[16] The "Apology" is not one of a kind even though it can be held up as a thing apart; it is not a species of discourse; it is a type. Some critics take the "Apology" as a "touchstone," a model by which other speeches of its kind should be compared. Analog criticism is the result of such comparison and evaluation, and analog criticism is an inductive process — reasoning from instances of similarity between two (or more) objects. The genre of "Apology" is established by demonstration that there are other examples of its kind. The examination of the "Apology" in and of itself is synchronic; the relating of it to other speeches is diachronic. Genre building requires both perspectives.

In sum, a genre is a classification of a thing. That thing, in this consideration, is discourse. To specify the genre to which a piece of discourse belongs is to make a "statement of its relationship to all other commensurable things," as Black observes in his essay, "The Sentimental Style as Escapism, or the Devil with Dan'l Webster."[17] The test of a genre, any generalization, is the degree of understanding it provides of phenomena. This test is also, it should be noted, the measure of rhetorical criticism. As genre and criticism are productive of useful understanding of things, they perform their highest function.

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[16] For an alternative view of genre building, *Form and Genre*, p. 22. See also: Tzvetan Todorov, *The Fantastic: A Structural Approach to Literary Genre*, trans. Richard Howard (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1975), pp. 3-23.

[17] *Form and Genre*, p. 76.

To answer the second question, how genres are constituted, it is essential to recognize the levels on which genre occur. Four levels of generality may be specified. First, there are the broad categories of discourse, including poetic, dialectic, and rhetoric. The usual distinctions posited among them are in terms of forms, functions, and/or relationships to reality. The best example of the argument on the relationships between poetic and rhetoric is the exchange between Wilbur Samuel Howell and Kenneth Burke.[18] The best example of the argument on the relationships of dialectic and rhetoric is that between Henry W. Johnstone, Jr. and Chaim Perelman.[19] Another contemporary classification of discourse, that of James L. Kinneavy,[20] identifies four forms of communication: expressive, referential, literary, and persuasive. The foundation of Kinneavy's scheme is what he calls the “aims” of discourse.

The second level of genre includes classifications of discourse within the categories of poetic, dialectic, and rhetoric. Poetic is usually divided into comedy and tradgedy, or narrative, dramatic, and lyric. Dialectic, viewed as philosophical discourse, is most often distinguished by subject matter, epistemology, axiology, metaphysics, etc. Rhetorical discourse forms have been made by reference *to place:* deliberative, forensic, and epideictic (Aristotle); *to communication intent:* to please, to inform, to convince, and to persuade (George Campbell); *to style of composition:* narration, exposition, argument, and persuasion (followers of Hugh Blair); *to aims* (Kinneavy);[21] and *to motives:* affirmation, reaffirmation, purification, and subversion (Fisher).[22]

The impact of Aristotle's categories on twentieth-century rhetorical criticism is well known, mainly through Black's *Rhetorical Criticism: A Study in Method.* Critics not only adopted Aristotle's categories of deliberative, forensic, and epideictic, they also took on his view that the means of persuasion were "proofs," rational demonstrations of ethos, pathos, and pistis. The outcome was a host of studies with common topics, composition, and conclusions. Genre served not as "terministic screens" but as "deterministic screens." I do not mean to suggest that a "neo-Aristotelian" strategy of criticism is never an appropriate one, rather that it is not always appropriate. No critical strategy is always the one and only means of revealing a useful understanding of a work.

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[18] Kenneth Burke, “I. Coloquy: The Party Line,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 62 (February 1976), 62-68; Wilbur Samuel Howell, “II. The Two-Party Line: A Reply to Kenneth Burke,” pp. 69-77. See also: “Kenneth Burke's 'Lexicon Rhetoricae': A Critical Examination,” in Wilbur Samuel Howell's *Poetics, Rhetoric, and Logic: Studies in the Basic Disciplines of Criticism* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1975), pp. 234-255. This essay originally appeared as “Rhetoric and Poetics: A Plea for the Recognition of the Two Literatures,” in *The Classical Tradition*, ed., Luitpold Wallach, (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1966), pp. 374-390; Kenneth Burke, “Rhetoric and Poetics,” in *Language as Symbolic Action: Essays on Life, Literature, and Method* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968), pp. 295-307; and “Poetics and Communication,” in *Perspectives on Education, Religion, and the Arts*, ed., Howard E. Kiefer and Milton K. Munitz (Albany, New York: State University of New York Press, 1970), pp. 401-418. See also: Carroll C. Arnold, “Oral Rhetoric, Rhetoric, and Literature,” *Philosophy and Rhetoric*, 1 (Fall 1968), 191-210.

[19] Henry W. Johnstone, Jr., “A New Theory of Philosopical Argumentation,” in *Philosophy, Rhetoric, and Argumentation*, ed., Maurice Natanson and Henry W. Johnstone, Jr. (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1965), pp. 126-134. See in the same volume: Chaim Perelman, “Reply to Henry W. Johnstone, Jr.,” pp. 135-137. Chaim Perelman, “Rhetoric and Philosophy,” *Philosophy and Rhetoric*, 1 (January 1968), 15-24. Henry W. Johnstone, Jr., “From Philosophy to Rhetoric and Back,” in *Rhetoric, Philosophy, and Literature: An Exploration*, ed., Don M. Burks (West Lafayette, Indiana: Purdue University Press, 1978), pp. 49-66.

[20] “The Basic Aims of Discourse,” *College Composition and Communication*, 20 (December 1969), 297-304.

[21] James L. Kinneavy, *A Theory of Discourse (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1971)*, p. 302.

[22] Walter R. Fisher, “A Motive View of Communication,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 56 (April 1979), 131-139.

The categories associated with Campbell, Blair, and Kinneavy have informed pedagogy but not rhetorical criticism. They serve the needs of the teacher well in that they provide insight into the creation of compositions, but they do not in themselves satisfy the requirements of the critic. The critic must have a category system like that of Aristotle, one that posits not only forms, but one that also specifies the material by which forms are manifested, indicating what discourse becomes as a finished product, as a thing experienced by an actual audience. (Campbell did this but his concept of "lively and glowing ideas" has not had the appeal of Aristotle's "proofs.") In other words, the critic depends on a theory of communication to make his or her account of a rhetorical interaction understandable, convincing, and useful. The rhetorical critic knows that "real" discourse is always suasory, and information, argument, exposition, and narration are means to the end of social influence.

A word or two regarding "A Motive View of Communication" is probably in order. Built on a biological metaphor, an assumption that rhetorical discourse functions to affect the life of ideas/images, I proposed that four motives of discourse could be identified: affirmation, concerned with giving birth could be identified: reaffirmation, concerned with revitalizing an image; purification, concerned with correcting an image; and subversion, concerned with undermining an image. A second assumption made was that there are recurrent rhetorical situations in history. If genres are to be useful to a critic, they must capture what is permanent and what changes in discourse across time. It seems that motives are the recurrent factor in human experience, reflecting as they do the characteristic responses people make to the decisions posed by the problems of human existence. The variable factor is how motives are given substance. Depending on an individuals theoretical stance, he or she can see motives enacted in rhetorical interactions through "proofs," "lively and glowing ideas," "signs of consubstantiation," and so on. Genres identify a universe of discourse, a panoply of objects by which the critic's choice of evaluation may be compared. The theory of rhetoric provides the concepts by which the critic can make his or her argument sensible and persuasive. "A Motive View of Communication" is a generic system informed by Burke's theory of rhetoric.

The third level of genre includes classifications of discourse within the categories sketched under the discussion of second level genre. At this third level can be listed poetic forms such as sonnet, sestet, and ballad, or the theater of the absurd, domestic tragedy, the satyr play. Rhetorical forms would include eulogy, convention nominating speeches, and apologies. Dialectical discourse on this level would encompass forms such as political philosophy, philosophical argumentation, and philosophy of science.

The move from one level of genre to another has led from the most general to the most specific. As this move has been made, the conventions that constitute a genre have become more and more particular, even to the point where the discourse they describe seems ritualistic in form, content, and presentation. For instance, where the category of purification identifies discourse designed to remedy a false image of some person, idea, or institution, and the critic recognizes that this function may be achieved through a variety of strategies and tactics, apologia, which is a subset of purification, is precisely delineated. Apologia, as conceived by Ware and Linkugel, is marked by four factors (strategies): denial, bolstering, differentiation, and transcendence; and four postures: absolution, vindication, explanation, and justification.[23] It is on this level, where the conventions that make a genre are most sharply designated, that three problems arise for the critic: the tendency to impose genre on a work, missing its distinctive qualities (as in much "neo-Aristotelian criticism"); the tendency to describe or to classify rather than to explain or to evaluate a work (as in much that passes for neo-Aristotelian and Burkean rhetorical criticism); and the tendency to write theory rather than criticism (as in much of the writing about "apologia").

On the fourth level of genre are categories of discourse represented in terms of style. Noteworthy examples of genre on this level would include Black's delineation of "sentimental style,"[24] Hofstader's analysis of the "paranoid style,"[25] and Carpenter's outline of the "jeremiad style."[26] This concept of genre, better than any other, illustrates how the elements that constitute a genre may be found in a variety of discourse forms. Each of the styles named here may occur as elements of epideictic, forensic, or deliberative discourse; of informative, convincing, or persuasive discourse; and of affirmation, reaffirmation, purification, or subversion. Thus, it is demonstrated again that genres are generalizations — the value of which is the degree of illumination they provide in regard to the working and worth of an instance of discourse.

Another significant body of literature that falls into the category of stylistic genre studies are those titled "The Rhetoric of . . . ." Exemplary examples of this class would include: Parke G. Burgess, "The Rhetoric of Black Power: A Moral Demand?,"[27] Karlyn Kohrs Campbell, "The Rhetoric of Women's Liberation: An Oxymoron,"[28] Roderick P. Hart, "The Rhetoric of the True Believer,"[29] and Robert L. Scott and Donald K. Smith, "The Rhetoric of Confrontation." The principal contribution of these essays is the construction of genre, the theoretical characterization of a mode of communication. They are not examples of criticism.

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[23] B. L. Ware and Wil A. Linkugel, "They Spoke in Defense of Themselves: On Generic Criticism of Apologia," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 59 (October 1973), 273-283.

[24] *Form and Genre*, pp. 75-86.

[25] Richard Hofstader, *The Paranoid Style in American Politics and Other Essays* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1965), pp. 3-40.

[26] Ronald Carpenter, "The Historical Jeremiad as Rhetorical Genre," in *Form and Genre*, pp. 103-177. For an excellent exploration of the jeremiad in American history, see: Sacvan Bercovitch, *The American Jeremiad* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1978).

[27] *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 54 (April 1968), 122-133.

[28] *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 59 (February 1973), 74-86.

[29] *Speech Monographs*, 38 (November 1971), 249-261.

They are, however, productive of generic conventions that can serve as critical norms.

The answer to the question posed at the beginning of this section, how are genre constituted, may be answered in a word: variously.

The answer to the third question in this investigation, how are genre manifested in specific rhetorical criticisms, is also briefly stated. Genre are manifested in specific criticisms by virtue of the way in which the critic interprets the object chosen for evaluation. *There is no criticism that is not genre criticism* on one or more levels as described above. What generally passes for genre criticism is that kind of analysis that occurs on the third level, the most particular one. Over fifty essays in recent speech communication journals, in addition to those already cited, fall into this category. Only four of these studies do not concern one form or another of political discourse. Three of these studies focus on religious discourse,[31] and the fourth essay concerns the "genre of semi-fiction."[32]

Earlier I rejected the role of critic of critics. I am not adverse, however, to recommending essays that provide useful criteria for such work: Wayne Brockriede, "Rhetorical Criticism as Argument,"[33] Bruce E. Gronbeck, "Rhetorical History and Rhetorical Criticism: A Distinction,"[34] and Karlyn Kohrs Campbell, "Criticism: Ephemeral and Enduring."[35] Application of ideas from these works to the catalogue of articles that follow reveals the validity of the observation already made: genre studies are often marked by the imposition of conventions on given instances of discourse, the writing of description or classification rather than explanation or evaluation, and the formulation of genre rather than the employment of genre as a foundation for assessment.

The following catalogue of political genre studies is organized under five headings. The imperfect nature of this division is, of course, a commentary on my dubious powers of analysis. It is also a further demonstration of the difficulty of establishing generic distinctions. (See especially the listing under "miscellaneous.") The hope is not to have done any serious violence to any author's view of his or her own work.

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[30] *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 55 (February 1969), 1-8.

[31] Thomas D. Clark, "An Exploration of Generic Aspects of Contemporary Christian Sermons," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 63 (December 1977), 384-394; Rollin W. Quimby, "Recurrent Themes and Purposes in the Sermons of the Union Army Chaplains," *Speech Monographs*, 31 (November 1964), 425-436; and Jerry L. Tarver "A Lost Form of Pulpit Address," *Southern Speech Communication Journal*, 31 (Spring 1966), 181-195.

[32] Sharon D. Downey and Richard A. Kallan, "Fusing Fact and Fiction: The Rhetorical Genre of Semi-Fiction," Western Speech Communication Association convention, Portland, Oregon, February 1980.

[33] *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 60 (April 1974), 165-174.

[34] *Speech Teacher*, 24 (November 1975), 309-320.

[35] *Speech Teacher*, 23 (January 1974), 9-14.

GENRE STUDIES OF POLITICAL DISCOURSE

(A non-exhaustive list)

Acceptance and Nominating Address

Robert N. Bostrom, " 'I Give You a Man' — Kennedy's Speech for Adlai Stevenson," *Speech Monographs*, 35 (June 1968), 129-136.

Robert Bostrom, "Conventional Nominating Speeches: A Product of Many Influences," *Central States Speech Journal*, 11 (Spring 1960), 194-197.

Edwin A. Miles, "The Keynote Speech at National Nominating Conventions," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 46 (February 1960), 26-31.

Robert O. Nordvold, "Rhetoric as Ritual: Humphrey's Acceptance Address at the 1968 Democratic National Convention," *Today's Speech*, 18 (Winter 1970), 34-38.

David B. Valley, "Significant Characteristics of Democratic Presidential Nomination Acceptance Speeches," *Central States Speech Journal*, 25 (Spring 1974), 56-62.

Apologia

Bower Aly, "The Gallows Speech: A Lost Genre," *Southern Speech Communication Journal*, 34 (Spring 1969), 204-213.

Sherry Deveraux Butler, "The Apologia, 1971 Genre," *Southern Speech Communication Journal*, 26 (Spring 1972), 281-289.

Ellen Reid Gold, "Political Apologia: The Ritual of Self-Defense," *Communication Monographs*, 45 (November 1978), 306-316.

Jackson Harrell, B. L. Ware, and Wil A. Linkugel, "Failure of Apology in American Politics: Nixon on Watergate," *Speech Monographs*, 42 (November 1975), 245-261.

James H. Jackson, "Clarence Darrow's 'Plea in Defense of Himself,' " *Western Speech*, 20 (Fall 1956), 185-195.

Richard A. Katula, "The Apology of Richard M. Nixon," *Today's Speech*, 23 (Fall 1975), 1-5.

Noreen W. Kruse, "Motivational Factors in Non-Denial Apologia," *Central States Speech Journal*, 28 (Spring 1977), 13-23.

Wil A. Linkugel and Nancy Razak, "Sam Houston's Speech of Self-Defense in the House of Representatives," *Southern Speech Journal*, 34 (Summer 1969), 263-275.

Howard Martin, "A Generic Exploration: Staged Withdrawal, The Rhetoric of Resignation," *Central States Speech Journal*, 27 (Winter 1976), 247-257.

Lawrence W. Rosenfield, "A Case Study in Speech Criticism: The Nixon-Truman Analog," *Speech Monographs*, 35 (November 1968), 435-450.

B. L. Ware and Wil A. Linkugel, "They Spoke in Defense of Themselves: On Generic Criticism of Apologia," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 59 (October 1973), 273-283.

Gerald L. Wilson, "A Strategy of Explanation: Richard M. Nixon's August 8, 1974, Resignation Address," *Communication Quarterly*, 24 (Summer 1976), 14-20.

Campaign Communication

Thomas D. Clark, "An Exploration of Generic Aspects of Contemporary Campaign Orations," *Central States Speech Journal*, 30 (Summer 1979), 122-133.

Donald Hayworth, "An Analysis of Speeches in Presidential Campaigns from 1884-1920," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 16 (February 1930), 35-42.

Andrew A. King and Floyd Douglas Anderson, "Nixon, Agnew, and the 'Silent Majority': A Case Study in the Rhetoric of Polarization," *Western Speech*, 35 (Fall 1971), 243-255.

James H. McBath and Walter R. Fisher, "Persuasion in Presidential Campaign Communication," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 55 (February 1969), 17-25.

Richard D. Raum and James S. Measell, "Wallace and His Ways: A Study of Rhetorical Genre of Polarization," *Central States Speech Journal*, 25 (Spring 1975), 28-35.

Lawrence W. Rosenfield, "George Wallace Plays Rosemary's Baby," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 55 (February 1969), 36-44.

Ceremonial Address

Harry P. Kerr, "Politics and Religion in Colonial Fast and Thanksgiving Sermons, 1763-1783," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 46 (December 1960), 372-382.

Harry P. Kerr, "The Election Sermon: Primer for Revolutionaries," *Speech Monographs*, 29 (March 1962), 13-22.

Frederick Larson, "Patriotism in Carmine: 162 years of July 4th Oratory," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 26 (February 1940), 12-25.

Howard H. Martin, "The Fourth of July Oration," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 44 (December 1958), 393-401.

Martin J. Medhurst, "American Cosmology and the Rhetoric of Inaugural Prayer," *Central States Speech Journal*, 28 (Winter 1977), 272-282.

Wayne C. Minnick, "The New England Execution Sermon, 1639-1800," *Speech Monographs*, 35 (March 1968), 77-89.

Harold D. Mixon, "Boston's Artillery Election Sermons and the American Revolution," *Speech Monographs*, 34 (March 1967), 43-50.

Miscellaneous

Jeff D. Bass, "The Rhetorical Opposition to Controversial Wars: Rhetorical Timing as a Generic Consideration," *Western Journal of Speech Communication*, 43 (Summer 1979), 180-191.

James W. Chesebro and Caroline D. Hamshir, "The Concession Speech: The MacArthur-Agnew Analog," *Speaker and Gavel*, 11 (January 1974), 39-51.

Thomas D. Clark, "An Analysis of Recurrent Features of Contemporary American Radical, Liberal, and Conservative Political Discourse," *Southern Speech Communication Journal*, 44 (Summer 1979), 399-422.

Richard B. Gregg, "The Rhetoric of Political Newscasting," *Central States Speech Journal*, 28 (Winter 1977), 24-35.

Michael Halloran, "Doing Business in Public," in *Form and Genre*, pp. 118-138.

Carol J. Jablonski, "Richard Nixon's Irish Wake: A Case of Generic Transference," *Central States Speech Journal*, 30 (Summer 1979), 164-173.

W. Sandra Nickel, 'The Rhetoric of Union: A Stylized Utterance," *Central States Speech Journal*, 24 (Summer 1973), 137-142.

Karen Rasmussen, "An Interaction Analysis of Justificatory Rhetoric," *Western Speech*, 37 (Spring 1973), 111-117.

Barbara Warnick, "The Rhetoric Of Conservative Resistance," *Southern Speech Communication Journal*, 42 (Spring 1977), 256-273.

Theodore Otto Windt, Jr., "The Diatribe: Last Resort for Protest," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 58 (February 1972), 1-14.

Donald L. Wolfarth, "John F. Kennedy in the Tradition of Inaugural Speeches," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 47 (April 1961), 124-132.

Cecil W. Wooten, "The Ambassador's Speech: A Particularly Hellenistic Genre of Oratory," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 59 (April 1973, 209-212.

Harold Zyskind, "A Rhetorical Analysis of the Gettysburg Address," *Journal of General Education*, 4 (April 1950), 202-212.

Special note should be made of several studies that combine genre and a theory of rhetorical transaction: Forbes I. Hill, "Conventional Wisdom — Traditional Form: The President's Message of November 3, 1969,"[36] Michael C. Leff and G. P. Mohrmann, "Lincoln at Cooper Union: A Rhetorical Analysis of the Text,"[37] David A. Ling, "A Pentadic Analysis of Senator Kennedy's Address to the People of Massachusetts, July 25, 1969,"[38] and Marie Hochmuth (Nichols), "Lincoln's First Inaugural."[39] One may quarrel about the orientation of these essays, neo-Aristotelian, neo-classical, and Burkean, but each study does explain and/or evaluate. The message in this fact is that genre is not sufficient in itself to provide a completely satisfying account of rhetorical interaction. Genre reveals significant aspects of discourse form; it does not illuminate the ways in which discourse functions — except formally. By its nature, rhetorical discourse, perhaps all discourse, is more than the conventions that identify it as a particular type; it is, as an experience, an action on the minds of audiences. To explain or to evaluate this action, a theory of communication is needed. Genre is but a part of such a theory.

The answer to the fourth question posed by this investigation, what are the ways in which genre contributes to the tasks of rhetorical criticism, is three fold. First, genre is an indispensable component in the knowledge of the critic. To know the kind of work an individual is dealing with is prerequisite to an adequate appraisal of it. Criticism is inherently an argument by comparison, and genre identifies "commensurable things." Second, genres indicate critical considerations relevant to the nature of a given work. This idea is well expressed by Mohrmann and

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[36] *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 58 (December 1972), 373-386. See also in this volume, " 'Conventional Wisdom — Traditional Form': A Rejoinder," by Karlyn Kohrs Campbell and the "Reply to Professor Campbell" by Forbes Hill, pp. 451-460.

[37] *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 60 (October 1974), 346-358.

[38] *Central States Speech Journal*, 21 (Summer 1970), 81-86.

[39] *American Speeches*, ed., Wayland Maxfield Parrish and Marie Hochmuth (New York: Longman's, Green and Co., 1954), pp. 21-71. One could add my essay, "Reaffirmation and the Subversion of the American Dream," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 59 (April 1973), 160-167.

Leff: "The immediate advantage of generic criticism is that it permits the creation of intrinsic standards for rhetorical discourse without losing sight of the audience."[40] Third, genre provides a theoretical basis for criticism, not a complete one, but a necessary and useful one. It seems reasonable to conclude from the analysis presented in this paper that genre is an inevitable consideration in doing any kind of rhetorical criticism. Genre is an aspect of critical method, not a critical method in and of itself.

The danger of genre is that it can overwhelm the critic. The essential stance of the critic must be *informed innocence*. Telling a useful "truth" about a remarkable work requires that the critic not only know about genre, it also necessitates that the critic know as much as is possible about rhetorical things, especially history and theory. But however much information the critic brings to a work, it must not blind her or him to the information provided by the work itself. To learn from the work, the critic must approach it with some degree of innocence, with an awareness that each work is the product of art, not science. Informed innocence insures that the critic's assessment of such product will be imaginative as well as intelligent, whether the critic is committed to a genre orientation or any other.

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[40] Mohrmann and Leff, "Lincoln at Cooper Union: A Rationale for Neo-Classical Criticism," p. 463. For an insightful and informative exploration of genre shifting and the ways in which humanistic metaphors have begun to inform the social sciences, see Clifford Geertz, "Blurred Genres: The Refiguration of Social Thought," *American Scholar*, 49 (Spring 1980), 165-179.

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Critical Models in the Analysis of Discourse

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The practitioners and advocates of rhetorical criticism are often more pleased to discuss their methods and assumptions than to examine their particular objects of study.[1] After all, rhetorical objects themselves — whatever their discursive embodiment — seem trapped by contingent circumstances, emerging and fading away as so many successive appearances. But rhetorical critics write on and on, all the while confirming one constant in their investigations: their own presuppositions. Seeskin has made the point about philosophy that it never seems to "improve";[2] i.e., it never conclusively demonstrates its previous convictions to have been in error, or outmoded. Despite the proliferation of discourse about discourse about discourse, and the growing sedimentation of our critical categories, the very same point could be made about the procedures of critics.

In this essay, several potentially important attempts to impose rigor upon critical projects from perspectives outside the artifact are examined. The motives for employing these critical models differ, along with their identifyable origins and relative degree of success. Of course, these matters cannot be exhausted here. Instead, some definitional roots for critical models and several argumentative types for the *use* of such models (along with representative examples of models themselves) are considered. Finally, several issues that bear upon the heuristic value of this critical procedure are discussed.

DEFINITION OF MODELS

The idea of critical models seems to have derived from the uneasy relationship of art to science. From the rather extreme vantage of Bowers' early article, "The Pre-Scientific Functions of Rhetorical Criticism,"[3] criticism was viewed as a relatively primitive step of creative investigation, eventually to be refined to propositions that might be tested through the rigor of empirical research. While most critics would not (and did not) accept this implied reduction of aesthetics to variables such as "language intensity,"[4] Bowers' position did raise an interesting converse possibility. Perhaps the constructs of normal science could provide procedural guidance to the perceptual and recreative phases of rhetorical criticism. Model criticism, then, might trace its beginnings to what Pepper has called the

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[1] There is a long list of studies and authors that might be cited here. But having no wish to exclude anyone (including myself) from these meta-critical tendencies, the temptation to "name names" is resisted.

[2] Kenneth R. Seeskin, "Never Speculate, Never Explain; the State of Contemporary Philosophy," *The American Scholar*, Spring, 1980.

[3] John Waite Bowers, "The Pre-Scientific Function of Rhetorical Criticism," *Essays on Rhetorical Criticism*, ed. Thomas R. Nilsen (New York: Random House, 1968), pp. 126-143.

[4] Ibid., pp. 134-136.

"empiricist" basis of criticism;[5] i.e., the facts that critics — in practice — must see, experience or recreate, and judge artifacts. If models may lend needed closure to that process, the next question, of course, is how. What specifically is a model, and how does it influence critical procedure?

In extracting a conception of model criticism, the prevailing views of models themselves must first be consulted. Yet the literature that discusses the critical function of models is not extensive; nor is this literature very directive for the practicing critic. Despite some definitional shortcomings, the work of Rosenfield and Smith provides the most useful starting point for the present inquiry. Rosenfield describes the "model modality" as the archetype for idealized performance that is then imposed by the critic upon singular instances of discourse. In "The Anatomy of Critical Discourse," Rosenfield writes:

> A model modality is employed when the critic starts by generating some sort of paradigm which he will use as a basis of comparison. Laymen commonly speak of models in reference to airplanes, toy houses, or sets of blueprints. They tend to associate the term with miniatures, objects, and/or plans drawn to scale. However, the more appropriate sense of 'model' in criticism is one which roughly corresponds to 'prototype' or to 'exemplar of a kind.' Drawing on his rhetorical theory, the critic generates a model representing his conception of what would have constituted the ideal speech for the situation. He then compares his archetype with the speech which was actually delivered in order to determine the degree and the nature of the disparity between paradigm and actual speech. The comparison precipitates a kind of diagnosis; if the model conforms to the critic's rhetorical theory (as we must assume it does if it is to be regarded as a paradigm), then disparity between the norm-discourse and the actual one should provide some insight into both the aesthetic excellence and the rhetorical weaknesses evident in the discourse being inspected.[6]

Rosenfield's analysis helps to clarify one important relationship between theory and practice by suggesting that the optimal precepts for rhetorical performance (the "model") may be derived from an existing body of rhetorical theory. Yet there are difficulties with such a conception as well. Viewed from Rosenfield's perspective, the model could be an exemplar for an overall type of discourse (as in genre criticism). The model could also be an optimalized pattern of responses to a rhetorical situation (as in pragmatic-historical criticism). Finally, since the model is not clearly distinguished from other methods, there is a problem of application as well. Rosenfield saw the model as a kind of touchstone for singular instances of performance, but of those few critics still examining individual pieces of discourse these days still fewer are proceeding in this fashion. Here is a case where critical practice may antiquate its theory.

Smith broadens our critical theoretic base first, by extending the application of model "archetypes" to a diversified range of rhetorical processes. In his *Orienta-*

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[5] Stephen Pepper, *The Basis of Criticism in the Arts* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1945), Chapter 1. Many of the technical terms employed in this essay are borrowed from Pepper.

[6] Lawrence Rosenfield, "The Anatomy of Critical Discourse," *Speech Monographs*, 35 (1968), 67-68.

tions to Speech Criticism, he notes: "If we understand the forces that contribute to effective communication — audience analysis, style in language, empathy, evidence, argument, preparation, and so on — then we can construct a model of ideal communication for each of the rhetorical processes we intend to evaluate."[7] He suggests further that *all* criticism makes this interplay between ultimate archetype and actual artifact an implicit step in its procedures. Yet this has the practical effect of making all critics model critics: "The actual rhetoric is realized only in comparison with the ideal transaction."[8] As the perspective on models expands in scope of relevance, it seems to diminish in explicit directions for actual analysis.

As a result, the view of models adopted here is more conventional and less openly prescriptive, namely, as the representation of an object, event, or process in abstracted form.[9] When this abstracted representation is applied to one or more instances of rhetorical discourse for the purposes of clarified explanation and qualitative judgment, then models are exerting an explicit influence upon critical practice. In other words, model criticism purports to draw some connection or analogy between the way an artifact of rhetorical communication functions structurally or operationally and the way some related specifiable process operates. Here is one point of interphase between communication art and social science that raises questions of allegiance and confirmation for both fields.

The critic, as a result of tradition or design, is absorbed with the concrete created object. For the critic, then, the origins of a model are irrelevant to its conceptual and critical utility. In the case of rhetorical criticism, it would be nice if the model came from some field amicable to communication, but it is not absolutely necessary. Conceivably, a model can be drawn from any source that promises to illuminate the phenomenon in question; it may be visual, pictorial, verbal-categorical, symbolic-mathematical, or whatever. Among examples of primitive models might be the mirror metaphor for journalism (seen as a mimetic enterprise) and the searchlight model for the same process viewed somewhat more dramatically (as, for instance, an investigative process). Much of what R. S. Crane called the "new criticism" might now be seen to fit into the present model framework. In dramatic criticism, psychoanalytic models have been used (and misused), even as the dramatistic allegory has been applied to the presentation of self.[10] In literary criticism, Neo-Marxist social theory has been applied to the study of texts, even as the tropes and conventions of textual narrative are now applied to ideology.[11] Such interdisciplinary philandering may arouse distrust from the purists in the original "schools." And it can be conceded that model criticism rarely respects the consistent primacy of either "form" or "context"[12] (to use Pepper's terminology again) in rhetorical criticism. Such criticism is a *hybrid* modality. Yet there is nothing intrinsically objectionable in hybrid constructs (since there is nothing intrinsic at all, by definition). If Black's dictum is taken to heart — to use everything available that promises to enlarge our understanding of the artifact itself[13] — then models will provide an important additional avenue of rhetorical study.

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[7] Craig R. Smith, *Orientations to Speech Criticism*, in "Modules in Speech Communication" (Chicago: Science Research Associates, 1976), p. 4.

[8] Ibid.

[9] Viewed this way, a model is a typification or a generalization that relies upon essential properties. Confirmation for this notion may be found in both ordinary language and social science literature. See, for instance, *The American College Dictionary* (New York: Random House, 1962), p. 781. On the social science conception of models, see Anthony Wilden, *System and Structure* (London: Tavistock Publications, 1972), Chapter 13.

[10] William Shakespeare, *Hamlet; With a Psycho-Analytical Study by Ernest Jones* (London: Vision, 1947). See also, Ernest Jones, *Hamlet and Oedipus* (Garden City: Doubleday Anchor Books, 1954).

[11] On the Marxist analysis of texts, see Fredric Jameson, *Marxism and Form* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1971). For the narrative deconstruction of ideologies, Hayden White, *Tropics of Discourse* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978) is an important reference work.

The second question to be addressed is one of use: how are models actually applied through the practice of rhetorical criticism? The best way to examine this question is to examine, in detail, what representative critics are doing with models.

CRITICAL APPLICATION OF MODELS

An overview of more than thirty years of critical literature suggests that models are performing three more or less distinct functions in the study of discourse. First, some model critics have been treating discourse as an index or symptom of larger social concerns. In general, such criticism seems to derive from the sociological interpretation of literature and may offer important contributions toward a semiotic of "social" discourse. Second, there is a traditional style of criticism that views discourse as the vehicle of ideas (whether they be of the rhetor or the critic). Such criticism is often eclectic in technique and is least dependent upon specific models for its analysis; in a non-intentional sense, it might be said that the work *is* the model. Finally, there is a growing number of studies that employ a model to identify and constitute the "rhetorical" features of discursive artifacts. Since much of public communication derives its materials from a number of different processes working in conjunction, models such as the "fantasy theme" approach attempt to frame emergent rhetorical features of such artifacts. In examining studies in all three areas, I am interested primarily in the inferences and arguments critics employ to enhance appreciation of the artifacts in question.

Symptom Criticism. The symptom critic is preoccupied with rhetorical discourse as a social document. Beginning perhaps with Lukacs' definitive speculations about class consciousness in the early part of this century,[14] the tradition of social symptom criticism has long been employing the popular art and advocacy of culture as emblems of modern social consciousness. Important steps in the refinement of symptom criticism include Warshow's studies of "The Gangster as Tragic Hero," and "The Westerner."[15] In these studies and Sonntag's excellent "The

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[12] Pepper, Chapter 3.

[13] This I take to be an important theme of Black, *Rhetorical Criticism: A Study in Method* (1965; rpt. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1978), especially Chapters 5 and 6.

[14] George Lukacs, *History and Class Consciousness*, trans. Rodney Livingstone (Cambridge: M.I.T. Press, 1971).

[15] Robert Warshow, "The Gangster as Tragic Hero," *Partisan Review*, 15 (February 1948), 240-244; Robert Warshow, "The Westerner," *Partisan Review*, 21 (March-April, 1954), pp. 190-203.

Imagination of Disaster,"[16] attempts were made to group roles or plots of popular artifacts together so that these might be used as evidence of cultural values. Contemporary symptom critics are continuing this tradition, but with one very important addition. Some writers are now attempting to systematize the framework of inference that allows an artifact to be viewed as a *sign*, i.e., that permits a critical judgment as to an artifact's generalizable social significance. The model, then, becomes the vocabulary "behind" the work as sign, the fabric of meanings that off-sets its significance. Since even the most mundane artifact is multifaceted, no model can attend to all of a work's "significant" features. Accordingly, the model will usually conditionalize perception and bracket alternative vocabularies even as it attends to a special "message" of the work. The model will allow the critic to allege, *ceteris paribus*, that the principles of political economy (or social ritual, or crowd psychology) are sufficient to infer some nonobvious meaning for the artifact in question.

In practice, of course, the critical argument itself is less certain. It is, alternately, an argument from fallible sign (without a fully exhaustive relational vocabulary) and an argument from example (with some of the inference-warrants played rather close to the vest). Logical problems abound, as they do throughout all critical attempts to systematize intuitive hunches.

Yet a survey of recent symptom criticism shows increasing concern with making inferential assumptions explicit and thus tightening the logic of justification.

An appropriate beginning to the increasing sophistication of model criticism can be found in Rosenfield's 1973 essay, "Politics and Pornography." The apparent incongruity in Rosenfield's "mix" of subjects (public/private; sacred/profane) warrants unprecedented attention by the author to the problem of method. Following an implicit charge of scholarly hypocrisy (directed to those who have neglected the area of pornography),[17] Rosenfield rejects both "literary" and "psychological" methods as inappropriate to his "rhetorical" subject; his replacement method suggests a mechanistic inquiry into questions of social significance:

> Viewing communication from a societal perspective and regarding human expressions as symbolic gestures, the rhetorical critic examines the constellation of transactions that occur when messages (apart from their creators) and publics *find* and *make* each other. And the question of how and why aggregates of individuals cluster around certain erotic images (as in other settings they cluster around more conventional political icons) like iron filings around a magnet, deliberately and repeatedly seeking out particular message elements, is a legitimate one for the student of public address to ask.[18]

Note two important qualifications to Rosenfield's symptom "model." First, on the dichotomy of artistic intention and aesthetic function, Rosenfield's analysis appears to be that of a functionalist. The only "deliberate" behavior that contributes to the message of pornography comes from the audience.[19] Second, his method of analysis seems to rely less on his own prescriptive conception of models (discussed earlier) and more upon a metaphorical sense of "public" discourse.[20] It is interesting that his study does *not* inquire after the *quality* of erotic literature.

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[16] Susan Sontag, "The Imagination of Disaster," in *Film Theory and Criticism; Introductory Readings*, ed. Gerald Mast and Marshall Cohen (London: Oxford University Press, 1974), pp. 422-437.

[17] Lawrence W. Rosenfield, "Politics and Pornography," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 59 (1973), 413-414.

[18] Ibid., 413.

The actual study of pornographic literature makes use of everything from its "anonymity" as word usage, the ethnography of its contemporary patrons, to (most importantly) its expressions of political power and victimage. Here the symptom analysis becomes a loose, though insightful, argument from analogy. The primacy of porn signifies a decadent civilization, a public that is disenfranchised, a submissive and alienated consciousness because of the recognizable ambiguities Rosenfield submits as evidence. The recurring "motif" of Hell's Angels ravishing virgins is probed for its fascist and authoritarian overtones; the fantasies of violence and subjugation inflicted by black gangs upon suburban housewives emerge as something less than a liberal dream of desegregation.[21] While the parallels he draws are striking, important strains in the analogy are neglected. Even as he alleges, "Pornography seen in this light is the *paradigmatic* rhetorical event,"[22] he does not ponder its elusive source of persuasive pleasure (enthymematic or otherwise). The specter of political impotence, subversive expression, and yet eventual submission is left to dangle (as it were) without consistent resolution. Yet, for all these problems, this essay is largely successful on its own terms as a perspective by incongruity. Most important, it charts a general path of analysis that others are only now pursuing.

Any chronicle of attempts to add rigor to symptom criticism should give special mention to the work of Thomas Frentz. From his study of popular artifacts, beginning with *The Exorcist*, through the two pieces on the "Rhetoric of Rocky" (with Janice Rushing), to the study "Rhetoric of the Warrior," some emerging traits of model criticism may be uncovered. In the piece on "Conversion of America's Consciousness,"[23] Frentz and Farrell were interested in identifying the model of torment, sacrifice, and redemption that both typified the exorcism ritual and might be applied to the film itself; the film's own structure was found to mirror the model. Thus, in the authors' view, the film's extraordinary financial success symptomized the growing thirst for purgation and redemption in the national consciousness circa 1974. Here again, much was made of the violation of taboos as a politically significant act; but the authors also attempted to pass judgment upon the film's authenticity as purgative experience.[24] Whatever the merits of that assessment, the judgment did not ground itself in the inference patterns of the initial model. The model's own argumentative movement was from the film as sign to the social arena in which the sign acquired force. In the more recent articles, an attempt has been made to repair the procedural difficulties of the *Exorcist* article and, in turn, to list the assumptions of models in much greater detail.

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[19] Ibid., 414.

[20] Ibid., 416, fn.

[21] Ibid., 419-420.

[22] Ibid., 417.

[23] Thomas S. Frentz and Thomas B. Farrell, "Conversion of America's Consciousness: The Rhetoric of *The Exorcist*," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 61 (1975), 40-47

[24] Ibid., 47.

In the first "Rhetoric of Rocky" article, the authors set forth a five-step social-value model that suggests application to much more than one public artifact;[25] indeed, the model's outlines are not far removed from Lukacs' original assumptions about social criticism. The second article, however, applied that model to an extraordinarily detailed analysis of the film itself. While the political message of the film was uppermost in the Frentz-Rushing analysis, the argumentative movement clearly was from historical situation — to model — to film.[26] And in the most recent piece, "The Rhetoric of the Warrior," still greater attention was devoted to the interplay of politics and aesthetics — this time within the film *The Deerhunter* and its surrounding controversy. Through the model Frentz and Rushing provided, the film itself could be seen as a purveyor of myth and archetype about warriors as heros — myths that may or may not have been applicable to this nation's experience in Vietnam and therefore, the authors allege, the controversy over the film *Deerhunter* as revisionist history.[27] The model seems especially appropriate in this last piece, since the controversy surrounding the artifact turned upon its implied prescriptions for social (and military) conduct. But whatever the motive for inquiry, the pattern of these respective articles has been to turn increasingly toward the model that the work itself conveys: as "equipment for living,"[28] as it were. And this critical development seems almost the conceptual inversion of Rosenfield and Smith's sense of model.

If it is true that the work itself becomes the source of an achetype for social life, then there is one unjustly neglected piece of work that must be mentioned: Merritt's "The Bashful Hero in American Film." Here is a remarkable study of a heroic role model that characterized American cinema in a variety of genres (exhaustively detailed) for a period of almost twenty years. The character, immortalized by James Stewart and Gary Cooper, was that humbled, awkward and inarticulate American male hero who became, on cue, crazed with eloquent conviction.[29] Once again, the works themselves convey the model, but the evidence, recurrent and cumulative, is startling and disturbing. Merritt's conclusion suggests a powerful indictment of the inconsistent social expectations for American males during the turbulent period of this study:

> Yet, it must be plain even from this survey that he [the bashful hero] has traditionally functioned as a coercive figure of considerable force. As a character American males have been encouraged to emulate, he has prompted a form of behavior that is both attractive and disturbing. Many of the traits

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[25] Janice Hocker Rushing and Thomas S. Frentz, "The Rhetoric of *Rocky*: A Social Value Model of Criticism," *Western Journal of Speech Communication*, 42 (1978), 63-72.

[26] Thomas S. Frentz and Janice Hocker Rushing, "The Rhetoric of *Rocky*: Part Two," *Western Journal of Speech Communication*, 42 (1978), 231-240.

[27] Thomas S. Frentz and Janice Hocker Rushing, "The Rhetoric of the Warrior," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 66 (1980), in press.

[28] Both the phrase and the perspective derive from Kenneth Burke, *Philosophy of Literary Form* (New York: Vintage Books, 1957), pp. 253-264.

[29] Russell L. Merritt, "The Bashful Hero in American Film," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 61 (1975), 130-131.

> he encourages are decent qualities for any civilization: humor, sympathy, kindliness, and patience. But he also, by his example, gives rise to a willful blindness in which the possessors of power may camouflage extreme aggression behind self-effacing charm.[30]

Merritt's implications draw upon psychoanalytic constructs, role theory, and contemporary history; the study itself is an invaluable contribution to all these areas of inquiry.

Together, the several symptom studies examined say much about the promise and potential difficulties of the model as social symptom. To their credit as critics, these authors all take great pains to recreate and convey the artifacts they address. Moreover, all of these studies actively engage the worldly implications of messages conveyed by their subjects — a fact that becomes important later in this analysis. But, on the problematic side, there is — as all model critics know — a recurring difficulty with standards of evidence. There is, one might say, a tendency to chew more than is bitten off; some studies seem to be a model in search of an appropriate object of analysis. Put another way, if a language is to mean very much, it must be used more than once. As Frentz and Rushing argued, there is a need to refine the language conveyed by symptom models,[31] to apply this language to more than media criticism and political artifacts and, most important, there is a need to move this budding semiotic inquiry forward by consulting more than one artifact at a time.

Didactic Criticism. There is a second variation of model criticism that is more traditional in conception. In viewing the artifact (whether literary or "rhetorical") as a vehicle of ideas, didactic critics offer a "prescriptive" conception of art that closely approximates some recent tendencies of the symptom critics as well. Like recent symptom criticism, the didactic approach is concerned with emergent "meanings" in rhetorical art, meanings that do *not* reduce themselves to identifiable characteristics of the artifact itself (i.e., unlike genre critics, or "formalists," didactic critics subordinate the constitutive features of the artifact's *kind* to the larger message of the work). But unlike symptom critics, those who practice didactic criticism are interested in the ontological definitions of the artist rather than the social reception by the audience. In looking to the writer or rhetor, interest is in the answers to questions that transcend the particularities of artifice. The tradition from Tolstoi through John Gardner's *Moral Fiction*,[32] "is concerned rather with the wisdom *inherent* in literature, with the judgment of its ethical soundness, the firmness and range of its imitation of life."[33] Since the formalism of Aristotle's *Poetics*, however, such a judgment has *not* been intuitively obvious (Tolstoi and Gardner notwithstanding); moreover, didactic critical judgments, even when soundly grounded, pertain only indirectly to the aesthetic quality of the rhetorical artifact. It remains quite conceivable that a given instance of rhetoric could be well-intentioned but poorly executed. To better understand the problems of justification attaching to didactic criticism, it is again necessary to examine representative examples.

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[30] Ibid., 139.

[31] Frentz and Rushing, "The Rhetoric of *Rocky*: Part Two," pp. 238-239.

[32] The references to the "didactic" tradition include Leo Tolstoi's much-excerpted "What is Art?" and John Gardner, *On Moral Fiction* (New York: Basic Books, 1978).

[33] Norman Foerster, "The Esthetic Judgment and Ethical Judgment," cited in Harold Simonson, *Strategies of Criticism* (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1971), p. 171.

Not surprisingly, some of the earliest, and best, didactic rhetorical criticism comes from those who write for audiences larger than are addressed by typical disciplinary journals. The social phenomenologist Alfred Schutz authored several exceptional readings of literary classics from a recognizably didactic view. Most notable, perhaps, was his study of "Don Quixote and the Problem of Reality."[34] In this study, it is the defenses and contradictions of man's subjective nature that preoccupies Schutz's critique. While the predilections of phenomenology and the author's pragmatic commitments furnish a ready-made blueprint for his reconstruction, it is the care and attention that is devoted to the novel's own details (the "enchanters," the "humours") as a scheme of interpretation that is most memorable in this study.[35] Instead of passing judgment on the novel's quality or twisting the work's purposes to suit his own, Schutz simply offers his philosophical reading as one additional way to appreciate the rich web of meanings in an acknowledged classic.[36] Closer to our own rhetorical tradition is the work of Richard Weaver, whose legendary didacticism was also somewhat more controversial. In a variety of fascinating studies Weaver wove his own theories of art, argument, biography, and history into remarkable readings of historical artifacts. Whether an individual agrees with Weaver's view of dialectic, rhetoric, or evolution (for that matter) Weaver's reading of the Scopes Trial documents is likely to alter the way we regard those documents.[37] In both Schutz's and Weaver's criticism, the clarity and force of the ideas under discussion are likely to override any reservations a reader may have about the critic's own conclusions.

Recent instances of didactic criticism have had somewhat less consistent success in locating and explicating ideas that do "justice" to the artifacts under study. Campbell's *Critiques of Contemporary Rhetoric* was apparently intended as a compendium of alternative approaches to artifacts of discourse that largely are political in intent or function. No examples of critical procedure are described as didactic; in fact, discussion questions following each critical essay tend to encourage the reader to discount the critic's biases. Yet the choice of discourses to be examined, the central themes, even the title captions leave little doubt that a distinguishable and consistent set of ideas is being urged upon the reader. Campbell's value commitments are liberal, humane, populist, honorable, and unavoidable. A few examples should suffice.

Campbell's feisty *Forum* exchange in the *Quarterly Journal of Speech* (with Forbes Hill, 1972) underscored her belief that the assessment of strategic tactics in discourse was, by itself, an insufficient grounding for critical judgment.[38] At some point, it was necessary to evaluate the moral content of the ideas conveyed by discourse. The point of dispute in the Hill-Campbell exchange was Nixon's 1969 "Vietnamization" speech, a speech Hill had considered under the title, "conventional wisdom." The difference in Campbell's own approach is underlined by her caption for the first of her critical essays, "An Exercise in the Rhetoric of Mythical America." The Nixon speech, Campbell believes, was a rhetoric of myths that must be evaluated "with the judgment of its ethical soundness, the firmness and range of its imitation of life."[39] In Campbell's view, the speech was a fabric of lies: "Although this speech fails to meet the President's criteria of truth, credibility, unity, and responsibility, the most significant criticism is that this rhetorical act perpetuates the myths about America, which must be debunked and shattered if we are to find solutions to the problems that threaten imminently to destroy us."[40] Despite Campbell's concern with the "structure" of the discourse, it is apparent that (unlike the genre or formalist criticism) there is little interest here in what it is that uniquely characterizes the speech itself. And despite Campbell's own strong statement of her convictions as a critic, what is problematic about this analysis is its rather transparent pretext for attacking policy choice as ideological myth. Not all mythic ideas are dangerously false; the anchoring or discounting of any such enlarged conception requires more careful argument than is offered in this criticism.

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[34] Alfred Schutz, *Collected Papers II: Studies in Social Theory* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1964), pp. 135-159.

[35] Ibid., pp. 140-141.

[36] Ibid., p. 136.

[37] Richard Weaver, "Dialectic and Rhetoric at Dayton, Tennessee," *The Ethics of Rhetoric* (Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1965), pp. 27-55.

[38] Karlyn Kohrs Campbell, " 'Conventional Wisdom — Traditional Form': A Rejoinder," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 58 (1972), 451-454.

In her subsequent essays, Campbell continues her task of setting forth the dominant ideas or motifs in representative instances of political discourse. As before, her comments are often striking. Yet, the ideas themselves occasionally seem doctrinaire, i.e., suggested less by the discourse than by the critic's own judgment. Agnew's critique of television is characterized as "an exercise in Manichean Rhetoric."[41] Not surprisingly, his discourse is dismissed as inauthentic. Paul Ehrlich's speech on the "Eco-Catastrophe" is described as the "Rhetoric of Science Fiction, Fantasy, and Fact."[42] George Wald's fine speech, "A Generation in Search of a Future," is described as a "rhetoric of Ultimate Values" (a far cry from "mythical America").[43] There is always, one would hope, a place for the eloquent, even strident expression of convictions that need to be stressed. The question for the didactic mode of criticism is whether the ideas, once dramatized, bring to the mind of the reader the subject of the critique, or its author.

Finally, there are several more recent essays (too many to be discussed here) that address ideas or themes that seem to inhabit a larger body of discourse. Among the more interesting variations on the didactic approach is Zarefsky's "The Great Society as a Rhetorical Proposition."[44] Although confronted with an imposing body of conflicting documents and circumstances, he painstakingly establishes his central allegation: "There *was* such a conceptual core to the Great Society, and it was revealed in a series of speeches by President Johnson during 1964 and 1965."[45] Perhaps the most rigorous of the didactic studies, this article uncovers several distinct themes embedded in the idea of "The Great Society": emphasis upon the quality of life, social equality, and an enlarged range of institutional responsibility. But more than this, he also discusses "symptoms" and problems in the actual realization of these themes: "One sign of a society inspired by quality is its ability not to be overwhelmed by change but to shape and direct the forces of change. This idea is discussed in the University of Texas speech, in which the President contrasted the Great Society with 'a legacy of despair and degradation, where a man's hopes are overwhelmed by change that he cannot control.' "[46] Since the symptoms he discusses are an active stimulus in the generation of a new idea, Zarefsky can draw strong inferences about the social "impact" of the Great Society. Much of the analysis that follows is a tactical treatment of rhetorical problems and appeals. Yet such forays into the historical-critical method do not, nor are they intended to, mask the author's essential didactic aim. This is clear from his conclusion:

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[39] Karlyn Kohrs Campbell, *Critiques of Contemporary Rhetoric* (Belmont, California: Wadsworth, 1972), pp. 50-57.

[40] Ibid., pp. 56-57.

[41] Ibid., pp. 94-109.

[42] Ibid., pp. 123-128.

[43] Ibid., pp. 58-66.

[44] David Zarefsky, "The Great Society as a Rhetorical Proposition," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 65 (1979), 364-378.

> The fifteen years since the Ann Arbor speech have introduced a discontinuity in public discourse, making obscure the fact that summoning the people through a vision of unlimited possibilities has been a recurrent appeal in the nation's rhetorical history. But there are cycles in the strength of these appeals, and at some time again it will be politically feasible and desirable for rhetors to appeal to an expansive vision of the future. At such time, rhetorical practitioners should be able to profit from studying the vision of the Great Society offered by Lyndon Johnson.[47]

Among the other studies of the generation of an idea from multiple sources, several employ a more eclectic methodology: examples include Solomon's "The 'Positive Woman's' Journey: A Mythic Analysis of the Rhetoric of STOP ERA," Foss's "The Equal Rights Amendment Controversy: Two Worlds in Conflict," and John Campbell's studies of Darwin and the rhetoric of history.[48]

Yet, here too there is one didactic criticism that requires special mention: Osborn's encompassing "The Evolution of the Archetypal Sea in Rhetoric and Poetic."[49] The study begins with a derivative treatment of the *sea* as a grand archetype for all varieties of literature. Here he relies upon a vast array of studies to confirm W. H. Auden's thesis that the Romantic revolution precipitated a new, positive connotation for symbolism related to the sea.[50] But the author's original contribution to this literature is founded upon an undiscovered dichotomy in poetic and rhetorical variations of the sea archetype. It seems that conventional, post-Romantic rhetoric never abandoned the early, pessimistic symbolism of the sea: "Perhaps," Osborn avers, "the rhetorician is the eternal man of the land."[51] Limited space cannot do justice to the complexities and implications of Osborn's argument. Even as the metaphors are sounded out they cumulate in significance, allowing the author to draw fascinating conclusions about the two arts of rhetoric and poetic, their differing relations to personal and social values.

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[45] Ibid., 364.

[46] Ibid., 366-367.

[47] Ibid., 378.

[48] Martha Solomon, "The 'Positive Woman's' Journey: A Mythic Analysis of the Rhetoric of STOP ERA," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 65 (1979), 262-274. Sonia K. Foss, "The Equal Rights Amendment Controversy: Two Worlds in Conflict," Ibid., 275-288. John Angus Campbell, "Charles Darwin and the Crisis of Ecology: A Rhetorical Perspective," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 60 (1974), 442-449. Also, John Angus Campbell, "The Polemical Mr Darwin," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 61 (1975), 375-390.

[49] Michael Osborn, "The Evolution of the Archetypal Sea in Rhetoric and Poetic," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 63 (1977), 347-363.

Even in their successes, however, articles as divergent as Zarefsky's and Osborn's point to the difficulties of didactic criticism. With few exceptions, the ideas conveyed by discourse require the most patient and prolonged inquiry. No singular discourse is likely to "confirm" the independent primacy of an emergent idea. Finally, no successful didactic criticism has found the intrinsic quality of an idea (whether discursively grounded or not) to be an intuitive proposition. Attempts to treat quality as "obvious" fail not only as model criticism, but as intellectual history as well.

Thematic Criticism. Although the final application of model criticism occasionally resembles some of the more recent didactic studies, this last variation deserves, much more, the title of a *school*. In addition to explaining the significance of discourse and to conveying the ideas held (or "withheld") by discourse, models may also *discover* or *construct* modes of discourse. In this last sense, models are employed in order to group and synthesize related shards and fragments of discourse within an identifiable composite structure. If one purpose of didactic criticism is to deconstruct conventional artifacts so as to uncover their emerging "meanings," the purpose of fantasy theme criticism seems to be a kind of rhetorical constructivism; it so varies the placement of disparate discursive particulars as to "sediment" them, thereby providing them with an identifiable composite structure.[52]

The work of Bormann and colleagues presents a model that seems to meet all the stipulations of everyone's definition. Almost as if to summarize our earlier discussion, the fantasy theme model derives from a source external to the artifacts of study, but compatible with the mainstream of communication research — the process of group discussion.[53] The model also seems to bring together important features of rhetorical practice that might otherwise be overlooked: in particular, the diachronic development of issues and "story-line" frames in contemporary political controversy.[54] Finally, the model seems to wed the prosaics of humanities thinking — from rhetoric, drama, and even conversation — to the apparent rigor of social science research in group discussion, balance theory, and psychology.

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[50] Ibid., 349-353.

[51] Ibid., 355.

[52] The terminology employed here represents a loose paraphrase of phenomenological nomenclature. See, Don Ihde, *Experimental Phenomenology: An Introduction* (New York: Capricorn Books, 1977).

[53] Ernest G. Bormann, "Fantasy and Rhetorical Vision: The Rhetorical Criticism of Social Reality," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 58 (1972), 396-398, fn.

[54] Ibid., pp. 400-403. See also Wilden.

The origins of the fantasy theme approach are best summarized in Bormann's 1972 article, "Fantasy and Rhetorical Vision: The Rhetorical Criticism of Social Reality."[55] But how does this model actually work within critical practice? The best answer that can be derived thus far from the wealth of fantasy theme studies is: elusively. The subjects investigated in Bormann's work say something for the range of the fantasy theme model. In his introductory essay on the subject, for instance, he touches on Hitler, the Puritans, martyrs, draft resisters, Shakespearean drama, and games.[56] In actual application, he has studied and discussed Lincoln's *Second Inaugural*, the Eagleton affair in McGovern's 1972 campaign for the Presidency, and political cartoons in the 1976 election.[57] Yet success in these studies (as well as in the myriad of applications by other scholars) has been rather mixed. Legitimate insights were offered about Lincoln's address; yet the speech, after all, was an artifact that seemed to articulate its own vision. Was the model really necessary? In the Eagleton analysis, the fit between artifactual "evolution" and model (what with psychosis, fantasy, and drama intervening)[58] seems to have been nearly exact. Once again, the violation of social taboos in the world of "fantasy" appearances has elicited a trenchant model commentary. The *Exorcist* piece and the recent Klumpp and Hollihan article, "Debunking the resignation of Earl Butz," are other model examples.[59] Nonetheless, the study of Eagleton's resignation found Bormann making the most of his contemplative distance.[60] This has been the most heuristic application of the model to date. The recent study of cartoons sought to validate the empirical features of the model; and it does.[61]

The problems with the constructivist application of models in general and fantasy theme analysis in particular may now be addressed briefly. Without belaboring the matter, there still seem to be aspects of the model that are less clear than the artifacts to be explained. And few, if any, of the fantasy theme studies have made an attempt to clarify its central presuppositions. In retrospect, it may be that the conversational origins of the model continue to pose difficulties. The evolution of a conversational sequence can be traced from the role of participant-observer, but there has not yet been a clear explanation of what "chaining out" really means within the social sphere.[62] The fantasy theme model succeeds in its stated aim of grouping together aspects of discourse and social reality that might otherwise be overlooked. This is a real and significant contribution to the critical literature. But, as a reader of these studies, I am still unsettled as to the result of this juxtaposition of discourse and social life. All too often, the resulting "vision" is simply held forth — at arm's length — for detached observation. It is beheld, as might any distanced object of aesthetic contemplation. This is fine with cartoons, of course, which are, after all, cartoons. But what of the Puritan vision of the afterlife, that of the martyr, the cultural defilement of the Civil War? Collingwood warned that the idea of history is all too easily confused with its dramatic surface. The result is spectacle, wherein history becomes a pageantry of images.[63] This is surely not the intention of the fantasy theme model. But critical disengagement from the artifact, a failure to take life seriously, has been one of its occasional results. Ontology does not yield comfortably to extrinsic systems of interpretation.

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[55] Ibid., pp. 396-407.

[56] Ibid.

[57] Ernest Bormann, "Fetching Good Out of Evil: A Rhetorical Use of Calamity," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 63 (1977), 130-139. Bormann, "The Eagleton Affair: A Fantasy Theme Analysis," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 59 (1973), 143-159. Bormann, Jolene Koester, and Janet Bennet, "Political Cartoons and Salient Rhetorical Fantasies: An Empirical Analysis of the '76 Presidential Campaign," *Communication Monographs*, 45 (1978), 317-329. Among other essays, see, Bormann, Jerie Pratt and Linda Putnam, "Power, Authority, and Sex: Male Response to Female Leadership," *Communication Monographs*, 45 (1978), 119-155.

[58] Bormann, "The Eagleton Affair."

[59] Frentz and Farrell, also James F. Klumpp and Thomas A. Hollihan, "Debunking the Resignation of Earl Butz: Sacrificing an Oral Racist," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 65 (1979), 1-11. There are, of course, many other essays that rely upon a similar method.

[60] Bormann, "The Eagleton Affair."

[61] Bormann, Koester, Bennett.

CONCLUDING QUESTIONS

At the beginning of this essay, several questions were posed that, together, help to define some problems and prospects of critical inquiry from what is called the model perspective. The initial history of model derivation, as well as the increasing sophistication of models in symptom criticism, should emphasize the importance of rigorous inference when addressing brute questions of explanation, e.g., social effects, popularity, and significance. Since most symptom artifacts are themselves hybrid composites of popular communication processes, it is not surprising that the models tend to be social-psychological in origin. While the bridging of communication theory and practice is one of the most promising features of such models, there is the occasional danger of substituting perceptual and explanatory closure for a careful reading of the work itself. In few cases has the critical model been as variegated and richly textured as even the most primitive popular artifact.

In didactic criticism (and in the symptom approach as well) there is a further issue of social and personal (as opposed to "artifactual") meaning. Just as critical models broaden aesthetic expectations, so they remind that the meanings, ideas, and themes of artifacts — especially "communicative" artifacts — are emergents. These ideas can no more be reduced to the artist's intentions than they can be reduced to a limited audience's coded response. The best model criticisms are thus able to show forth unanticipated features in even the most conventional communicative artifacts. The danger here is that the critic's own "party line," projected into the model itself, may sometimes be confused with the message(s) of the artifact. Even the most sensitive critic must remain subservient to the meaning of the artifact.

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[62] Space does not permit a detailed discussion of this important question. The interrelations of empirical analogies (with group discussion and other interpersonal constructs) and social consciousness await more rigorous examination than has been offered by either Bormann's criticism or other more speculative inquiries (including my own). The inquiries of Frentz, Farrell, et al. appear to require data, while the inquiries of Bormann, et al. appear to require more carefully crafted theory.

[63] R. G. Collingwood, *The Idea of History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1956), p. 214.

Finally there is the problem of judgment. Most of the scholarly skepticism about model criticism seems to reside here. There are two interrelated reasons for this. First, models themselves are not primarily normative or prescriptive creations, this despite our inevitable attachment to what we have made. Unless norms are introduced covertly, or stipulated from the outset without argument, the primary function of the model (its *telos*, were models to be classically inclined) is one of explanation. And an explanation is not a judgment. Not even the effective bridging of theory and practice is able to bridge the dualities of *is* and *ought*. What this means is that model criticism requires additional and rigorous argument before its judicial warrant is completed. The second reason for skepticism is less intrinsic to models than the first. Models are simplifications, and sometimes fanciful and slapdash simplifications at that. And sometimes, a model may discount or trivialize the significance of social reality, merely through its associations. I need not add that this is not critical judgment either.

More than any other mode of critical discourse, then, models are still cursed and blessed by their "pre-scientific" origins. In the end, however, the critic needs to see *through* the lens they provide and sometimes even to take the glasses off. Models enlarge the world of critical inquiry even as they threaten to cover over its objects. The models discussed here do both — sometimes at once. So there, at least, is one sense in which models do present an optimal critical modality only to the mind of the critic.

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Dramaturgical Theory and Criticism: The State of the Art (or Science?)

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To urge an examination of "dramaturgical theory and criticism" is, among devotees of speech communication and its allied fields, to risk terminological distemper at first and methodological confusion shortly thereafter. We incorporate communities, after all, which are conditioned to use the suffix "-ic" in reference to artifacts and experiences which remind us of theatre, and the suffixes "-ism" and "istic" relative to Burkean notions and methods. "-Urgy" and "-urgical," however, roll strangely over our tongues.[1] Indeed, most of us use few words — perhaps "metallurgy," "liturgy," "chemurgy" — with such a formidable ending.

Nevertheless, in fields as diverse as political science, sociology, criminology, psychology, mass communication, anthropology, psychiatry, and the like, are springing scholars armed with dramaturgical perspectives on the world.[2] Some are hailing the perspective as one which, at last, will help bridge Snow's "two cultures," uniting rationalistic modelling and systematic observation in a grand conceptualization of human beings in society.[3] Others are borrowing research techniques normally associated with ethnomethodology, ethnography, construc-

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[1] The obvious exceptions are those who study and preach the dramaturgical gospel of Erving Goffman. He was quite clear on his orientation in 1956: "The perspective employed in this report is that of the theatrical performance; the principles derived are dramaturgical ones" *(The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* [1956; rpt. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday Anchor Books, 1959], p. xi). As he proceeded through his next books, however, Goffman subtly but surely softened the theatrical analogy, aligning himself — as is in *Interaction Ritual* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday Anchor Books, 1967), esp. p. 2 — with ethnographers and social psychologists. In a sense, he has become more microscopic — even cinematic — in his analyses of "frames," "faces," and "performances," and more concerned, hence, with method. Yet, he obviously was a most important figure in introducing the idea of "dramaturgy" among American sociologists and communications scholars.

[2] As exemplars, see: Goffman; Hugh D. Duncan, *Symbols in Society* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1968); John Lofland, "The Dramaturgy of State Executions," in *State Executions Viewed Historically and Sociologically* (Montclair, N.J.: Patterson Smith Publishers, 1977); Bruce E. Gronbeck, "The Functions of Presidential Campaigning," Judith S. Trent, "Presidential Surfacing: The Ritualistic and Crucial First Act," and Thomas B. Farrell, "Political Conventions as Legitimation Ritual," in *Communication Monographs*, 45 (1978), 268-280, 281-292, and 293-305; Ferdinand Mount, *The Theatre of Politics* (New York: Schocken Books, 1972); Mary Douglas, ed., *Rules and Meanings; The Anthropology of Everyday Knowledge*, Penguin Sociology Readings (Baltimore : Penguin, 1973); G.S. Wilkinson, "Psychiatric Disorder Dramaturgically Considered," *Sociological Quarterly*, 15 (1974), 143-158; A. P. Hare, "A Category System for Dramaturgical Analysis," *Group Psychotherapy and Psychodrama*, 26 (1976), 1-14. The fullest literature on "dramaturgy" is in dramatic and theatrical studies where it generally refers to the arts of translating dramatic scripts into a full set of performance values.

[3] See James E. Combs and Michael W. Mansfield, ed., "Preface: The Perspective of Life as Theatre," in *Drama in Life: The Uses of Communication in Society*, Communication Arts Books (New York: Hastings House, 1976), esp. pp. xv-xvi

tionism, cognitive sociology, etc., to generate grounded lawful relationships which perhaps can be molded into full-blown scientistic theories.[4] Both the speculative philosophers and data-bound researchers are producing scholarship highly attractive to students of communication.

The attractiveness is there because most dramaturgical speculators and researchers find concepts of language and communication central to their theorizing and observing. Their pre-theoretical assumptions hinge on notions of "language" and "communication" understood as definitive of "self" and "society"; and, their data normally are comprised of bits and pieces of communicative behavior which either operationalize types of social roles or illustrate the power of social archetypes and rules in cultural life.

This essay, therefore, (1) lays out some of the theoretical assumptions governing dramaturgical perspectives on life, (2) discusses briefly some of the current research and research methods enfolded by the paradigm, and (3) concludes with a general forecast of dramaturgy's utility for communications analysts and rhetorical critics.

"ALL THE WORLD'S A STAGE"

Tradition has it that the sign spanning Shakespeare's Globe Theatre read, *Totus Mundus Agit Histrionem*. That may have been but an adman's cheap shot, or it may have served as the major premise for a dramatic theory, one which saw theatre as a quintessential vehicle for propagating foundational truths. Or, more intriguingly, it may have enscribed an epistemological or even ontological proposition. It is that third possibility which must be explored.

That proposition, simply, can be framed in two forms. The weaker form — "Life is *like* drama" — proposes a presumably useful analogy. So, for example, in his critique of Goffman, Messinger argues that "All this [flaws in Goffman's analyses] adds up to pointing out some of the ways in which the theatrical simile is a simile, not a homology. It is a simile, a frame of reference, invoked by the analyst to segregate and permit him to analyze *one* of the multiple functions of interaction: its 'impressive' function." That simile, however, is nonetheless pictured as a useful one: "It . . . enables the analyst to himself abandon, if only for a while, the perspective of everyday life; it enables or forces him to stop taking for granted what his subjects *do* take for granted, thereby permitting him to talk *about* these matters."[5]

The stronger form of the proposition — "Life *is* drama" — has more advocates, currently, than the analogue does. Georg Simmel saw little difference between the actor-as-actor and all human beings as actors. Goffman, similarly, argues that people are part "performers," part "characters," and hence "actors" in all meaningful senses of that word. Natanson asserts "Life-action, then, is a condensed rehearsal in on-going imagination of limits and possibilities. The actor in life is probing, feeling out, thrusting himself toward decisions he knows he can and will make.''[6] Simmel, Goffman, Natanson, and others ask serious consideration be taken of the assertions that people are actors, and that the social order, networks, and operations are best understood dramaturgically.

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[4] The notion of "grounded theory" — a general inductive theory-building process — is reviewed in the second section; it is a hallmark for the sorts of research dealt with here.

[5] Sheldon L. Messinger with Harold Sampson and Robert D. Towne, "Life as Theatre: Some Notes on the Dramaturgic Approach to Social Reality," in Combs and Mansfield, p. 80. (Orig. pub. in *Sociometry*, 25 [1962].) Cf. Bruce Wilshire, "Role Playing and Identity: The Limits of the Theatrical Metaphor," *Cultural Hermeneutics*, 4 (1977), 199-207.

While any number of variant and incipient dramaturgical models can be found in theoretical and applied literatures, a basic schematic representation of the perspective might take the following form:

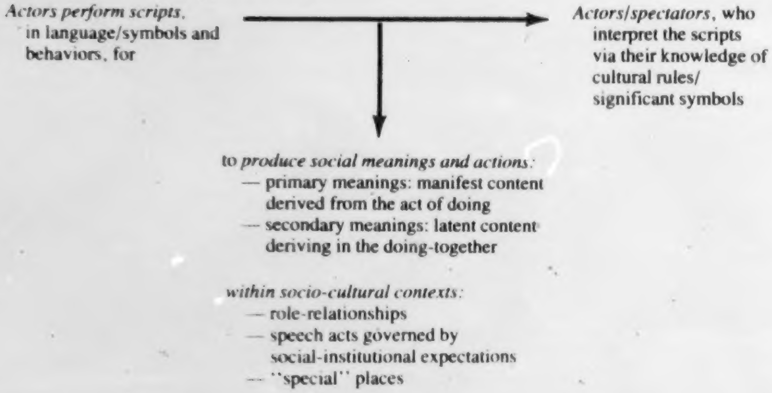
Actors perform scripts,
in language/symbols and
behaviors, for
Actors/spectators, who
interpret the scripts
via their knowledge of
cultural rules/
significant symbols
to *produce social meanings and actions:*
— primary meanings: manifest content
derived from the act of doing
— secondary meanings: latent content
deriving in the doing-together
within socio-cultural contexts:
— role-relationships
— speech acts governed by
social-institutional expectations
— ''special'' places

Figure 1: Dramaturgical Models of Communication in Society

The vocabulary necessary to rationalize this model runs more or less as follows:

Actor. Human beings are usefully considered actors in several senses of that word. (1) People ''act'' rather than ''move''; that is, human beings are assumed to be purposive creatures who both reflect standards of action fostered by a collectivity and follow prescribed forms or rituals when seeking to express particular ideas and motives.[7] (2) People, often and perhaps always, play out pre-given scripts in their interactions with others. Those who avoid scripting risk misunderstanding or social ostracism.[8] (3) Persons are aware of their roles as actors. There is inherent to inhabitants of collectivities intrapersonal separations of their ''me's'' from their ''I's'' or their ''selves'' from their ''roles.'' Variously, the ''me'' is seen as the mediator between the ''I'' and ''society'' or ''significant others,'' as the social judge through which a person engages in self-critique, as the source of *personae* which can be assumed or taken on at any given moment, or as the ''critical stance'' which, in times of reflection, allows a person to break out of the "mundane" or "taken-for-granted" world of everyday affairs.[9]

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[6] Goffman, ''The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life,'' Combs and Mansfield , p. 70; Maurice Natanson, ''Man as an Actor,'' ibid., p. 54; Georg Simmel, ''The Dramatic Actor and Reality,'' ibid., esp. pp. 59-61. (Orig. pub., respectively, in *The Presentation of Self . . .; Philosophy and Phenomenological Research,* 26 [1966]; and *Georg Simmel: The Conflict in Modern Culture and Other Essays,* trans. K. Peter Etzkorn [New York: Teachers College Press, 1968].)

[7] The ''action-motion'' distinction is crucial to Kenneth Burke's understanding of dramatism and humanity; see, e.g., *A Grammar of Motives* (New York: Prentice-Hall, 1952), pp. 14, 32, 66, and other places.

[8] See, e.g., Erving Goffman, *Asylums* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1961), *passim.*, for the argument which stresses social-institutional judgments of ''scripts.''

Spectators. Sometimes, of course, interaction occurs between actors who mutually construct intersubjective meanings and concerted actions. At other times — and especially in large-scale cultural events — there is a psycho-social gulf between "actor" and "spectator," or between "performers" and "witnesses." The relationships between leader and follower (or between celebrity and fan) are dramatic, with one set of personae performing "properly" for a set of witnesses. Spectators in these relationships are not sponges, for leaders-status or celebrity-status demands confirmation by witnesses. Both actor and spectator, after all, enact culturally determined roles; collective celebration or decision-making demands that actors offer socially acceptable behaviors and that witnesses express approval of the performances. The actor-spectator relationship can be explored via several vocabularies, including those concentrating on "social roles," "speech acts," "role-taking," "symbolic leadership," "ceremonies" or "sociodramas," or "image-building."[10]

Scripts or Messages. Any number of conceptions can be introduced here, for a particular theorist-researcher's approach to message is informed by a discipline's technical vocabulary for describing specific aspects of messages or scripts. A sociodramatist such as Duncan views scripts as ritualistically enacted, prescribed forms and symbols. An ethnomethodologist such as Garfinkel sees them as mutually constructed modes of action and problem-solving. A sociolinguist-ethnographer in the mold of Hymes seeks out the "linguistic markers," the "speech acts," the "interpretive codes," and "kinship terms" which allow appropriate codes, forms of speech, and "registers" to be specified as people shift from group to group, situation to situation, purpose to purpose, channel to channel, tone to tone, and genre to genre. Ethnographers, such as Geertz and Douglas, go so far as to construct invisible or underlying codes which explain nonverbal interactions. A symbolistic political scientist such as Edelman thinks of messages in terms of their referential and condensational symbolicity, their psychological distance from the auditors, their forms or functions (horatory, legal, administrative, and bargaining), and, later, their reliance upon myth to control popular perceptions.[11] The term "message" normally is used by scholars microscopically analyzing linguistic matters, while "scripts" is the word which dominates the thought of those working more macroscopically on social rituals or themes.

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[9] The "I/me/significant others/they" distinctions appear to be original to George Herbert Mead, *Mind, Self, and Society* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1934); the "self-role" opposition forms the core of the argument in Henry W. Johnstone, Jr., *The Problem of the Self* (University Park: Pennsylvania State Univ. Press, 1970), among other places; the "mundane vs. critical stance" vocabulary is developed in Alfred Schutz and Thomas Luckmann, *The Structures of the Life-World*, trans. Richard M. Zaner and H. Tristram Engelhardt, Jr. (Evanston, Il.: Northwestern Univ. Press, 1973) and in David L. Swanson, "A Reflective View of the Epistemology of Critical Inquiry," *Communication Monographs*, 44 (1977), 207-219.

[10] On social rules, see Raymond D. Gumb, *Rule-Governed Linguistic Behavior* (The Hague: Mouton, 1972); on role-taking in various political systems, see Georges Balandier, *Political Anthropology*, trans. M. Sheridan Smith, Vintage Books (New York: Random House, 1970), esp. pp. 41-49; on symbolic leaders, see Orrin E. Klapp, *Symbolic Leaders: Public Dramas and Public Men* (Chicago: Aldine, 1964), and Murray Edelman, *The Symbolic Uses of Politics* (Chicago: Univ. of Ill. Press, 1964); on ceremonies and sociodramas , see Hugh D. Duncan (n. 2) and Harold Garfinkel, "Conditions of Successful Degradation Ceremonies," *American Journal of Sociology*, 61 (1955-56), 420-424; on speech-acts as definers of spectators, see Dell Hymes, "Sociolinguistics and the Ethnography of Speaking," in *Social Anthropology and Language*, ed. Edwin Ardener (New York: Tavistock, 1971), esp. 64-70; and, on image-building in this context, see Robert O. Anderson, "The Characterization Model for Rhetorical Criticism of Political Image Campaigns," *Western Speech*, 37 (1973), 75-86.

Social Meanings and Actions. Regardless of specific perspective, most scholars of a dramaturgical tendency believe that all standards for "meaningfulness" are socially determined and that all "actions" take on significance only as interpreted by society- or subculture-wide evaluative frames. Individualized meanings and idiosyncratic actions, while perhaps expressive in some sense, are not seen as communicative. In general, then, symbols and symbolizing are discussed as second only — if at all — to biological drives as forces dominating human life,[12] and meaningfulness is taken to be the goal and potential outcome of *all* human activity. Primary or manifest content is a product of the successful employment of referential language or any other social code, while latent content is a product of enactment or the successful employment of symbolizing language — language or codes appropriate to certain roles, used in particular contexts, at appropriate times and places. In other words, "meaningfulness" is a two-dimensional concept, with the comprehension dimension dependent upon "competency" in using codes and with the appropriateness dimension dependent upon social-institutional knowledge of standards for "performance." The "competently performed" message is both correct and strategic, i.e., it conforms to both linguistic and social-institutional rules.[13]

Socio-Cultural Contexts. Among dramaturgists and their allied brethren, paradoxically, the notion of context is highly problematic; it should be their strength (for the theatrical analogy inevitably must put stress on "theatres" or "special places"), but it is not, perhaps because each traditional discipline has examined context in different ways. So, for symbolic interactionists in a Meadian tradition, "context" is simply a here-and-now point of communication exchange, a chance for some mutual meaning-construction. For sociodramatists, contexts essentially vary on an environmental scale ranging from one-to-one interactions through full-blown, society-wide, political arenas. The ethnomethodologists and other proponents of sociological "grounded theory" so far disdain all attempts to organize contexts systematically, preferring to find and define them "naturally." Among ethnographers and sociolinguists there is a tendency to delineate contexts according to the community's language-use patterns and expectations; so, some aspects of their work (e.g., the study of speech acts) reflect a concern for axiologies, while other facets (e.g., exploration of situations) yield to a temptation to discuss only exemplars. Fifth, scholars operating within a rules-paradigm, especially those called "philosophers-of-action," generally trace contexts to institutional and/or cultural standards for verbal and nonverbal behavior. And, finally, some few "pure" dramaturgists and game theorists attach special significance to the "place" per se, to that-which-is-set-apart for particular secular or sacred activities.[14] In a sense, such diverse approaches to context are surprising, but in another they are not: all of these theorists and researchers focus, in one way or another, on meaning-construction and meaning-attribution. Because any particular individual possesses psychologically any number of "frames" or "reference points" when seeking to "understand," it is little wonder that different scholars and perspectives concentrate on alternate contexts.[15] About all they agree upon, then, is that questions of meaningfulness are inextricably bound up with sociocultural contexts and social expectation.

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[11] See Duncan, esp. pp. 110-130; Hymes, pp. 60-63, 65-67, 75-76; Clifford Geertz, "Deep Play: Notes on the Balinese Cockfight," and Mary Douglas, "Deciphering a Meal," in *Myth, Symbol, and Culture*, ed. Clifford Geertz (New York: W. W. Norton and Co., 1971), pp. 1-37, 61-81; Edelman, esp. pp. 6-7, 73-83, 133-149, as well as his *Politics as Symbolic Action* (New York: Academic Press, 1971), esp. pp. 12-22, 65-73.

[12] George N. Gordon, "Symbols and Men," in Combs and Mansfield, pp. 17-21. (Orig. pub. in his *Language of Communication* [New York: Hastings House, 1969].)

[13] The competency-performance distinction is developed in Noam Chomsky, *Language and Mind* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and World, 1968), with the "performance" half of that equation expanded in Hymes. The notion of "social rules" as guides to appropriate discoursing is highlighted in Gumb; and "appropriate" discoursing as related to proper roles played out in proper places is discussed in Bruce E. Gronbeck, "The Rhetoric of Political Corruption: Sociolinguistic, Dialectical, and Ceremonial Processes," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 64 (1978), 155-172.

In this review of general constructs two focal points have emerged in dramaturgical theory. Both centers can be traced back to Mead's *Mind, Self, and Society*, a book which haunts the footnotes of most of the theorists and researchers mentioned so far. Running through that book is constant tension between "self" and the "significant other," between "me" and "my society." Ultimately, the self-society dilemma must be resolved by grasping one of its horns. Some seize upon the "self," to explore "I/me" in the dizzying "life-world" of mundane experience or the Self seeking to perform roles competently. Others trumpet the doctrine of societal supremacy, concentrating upon the social world as pre-given, all-important, and determinative, and hence viewing individuals as either captives of language/routine/ritual or creatures of expectations/significant others. The dramaturgist, therefore, must make a choice as to where to enter the theatrical model: join the play with the actor, or sit as a spectator ready to judge proper and improper performances of the script.

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[14] For symbolic interactionism, see Herbert Blumer, *Symbolic Interactionism: Perspective and Method* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1969), esp. Chap. 3; for a sociodramatic approach, see Duncan, esp. his distinctions among games, play, parties, festivals, ceremonies, drama, and rites (pp. 173-193) as discrete contexts; see the disparities among ethnomethodological approaches to context in Harold Garfinkel, *Studies in Ethnomethodology* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hal 1967) and in Roy Turner, ed., *Ethnomethodology: Selected Readings* (Baltimore: Penguin, 1974); the problem of context faced by ethnomethodologists and other "grounded theory" proponents is discussed in Howard Schwartz and Jerry Jacobs, *Qualitative Sociology: A Method to the Madness* (New York: The Free Press, 1979), esp. pp. 234-235; to see various sorts of ethnographers, sociolinguists, and dialecticians at work on context, see Samir K. Ghosh, ed. *Man, Language and Society* (The Hague: Mouton, 1972), Joshua A. Fishman, ed., *Readings in the Sociology of Language* (The Hague: Mouton, 1968), Ardener (n. 10), and John Gumperz and Dell Hymes, *Directions in Sociolinguistics* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1972); among the rules-people, see especially Gumb, Dorothy M. Emmet, *Rules, Roles, and Relations* (London: Macmillan, 1966), and Susan B. Shimanoff, *Communication Rules: Theory and Research*, Sage Library of Social Research, Vol. 97 (Beverly Hills: Sage, 1980); the classic "game" approach to place is Johan Huizinga's, in *Homo Ludens: A Study of the Play Element in Culture* (1938; rpt. Boston: Beacon Press, 1950), while Goffman (*Asylums*) is a good example of a dramaturgist concerned with special places, as are Bill Kinser and Neil Kleinman in *The Dream That Was No More a Dream: A Search for Aesthetic Reality in Germany 1890-1945* (Cambridge, Mass.: Schenkman, 1969).

[15] This argument is developed more fully in Gronbeck, "The Functions . . . ," 278-279.

THE "-ISMS" AND "-OLOGIES": METHODS OF RESEARCH

Among partisans of dramaturgy and related perspectives there exists a maddening variety of research methods, a variety reflective of dramaturgy's multi-disciplinary appeal. Almost nobody is trained to be a dramaturgist as yet; rather, it is a perspective normally acquired after being educated as a more traditional sociologist, psychologist, political scientist, communications scholar, etc. Hence, there is a natural tendency to approach dramaturgical research with the tools possessed before getting qualitative religion.

Thus, inside the intellectual tent are found speculative philosophers, many of whom are adherents of Alfred Schutz; reborn sociologists following Mead and Burke; psychologists who have new-modelled Freud so as to stress "dramatizing" as a self-expressive communicative function; political scientists and criminologists who have discovered that power and influence depend upon symbols and rituals; mass communications scholars who find Huizinga's interpretation of "play" irresistible; anthropologists enamored with Durkheim's speculations on the roots of mental classification systems; ethnomethodologists following Garfinkel into the jumbled world of group-centered decision-making and practical actions; sociolinguists and ethnographers seeking to expand significantly Chomsky's ideas of competency and performance; and philosphers-of-action determined to overcome the positivist's verifiability criterion via exploration of popular reasoning patterns and rules-of-conduct.[16] Methodologically, then, among dramaturgists one finds speculative philosophical analysis, laboratory experimentation, field experimentation, field surveys, historical-cultural research, and even straightforward critical perspective-taking.

Because the focus here is upon rhetorical criticism, or more broadly, the analysis of communicative artifacts and events, our concern is with relatively few research methods. The purpose is to skeletonize representative research procedures which can be used to deconstruct and/or reconstruct communicative events so as to fit them into dramaturgical perspectives. This task undoubtedly involves some extensions of original authors' purposes and goals; the hope is, nonetheless, that methodological clarity and relevancy will be the result.

The Participant-Observer Analysts

Field surveys and investigations have been a hallmark of many sociologists and anthropologists seeking alternatives to laboratory-based research. So-called "qualitative" field studies — those which prefer to work with paradigmatic cases of social phenomena recorded, not in numerical notation systems, but rather in natural language — represent a vital branch of inquiry.[17] Qualitative scholars believe they are in a position to rationalize (understand) human behavior — people's role conceptions, their modes of mutual action, their sense of competencies, their perception of symbols/myths/dramas governing their lives — by working from natives' self-reports and interpretations of daily events. More particularly, among many Meadians, "participant-observation" is *the* proper research method, for it alone is presumed to generate "grounded theory," that is, theoretical statements based upon actual behaviors in actual situations by natives attempting to sort through, understand, and respond to social life.

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[16] Most of these people are noted in previous citations. In addition, see Emile Durkheim and Marcel Mauss, *Primitive Classifications*, trans. and intro. Rodney Needham (1903; trans. Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1963). Among philosophers-of-action, see esp. Gidon Gottlieb, *The Logic of Choice; An Investigation of the Concepts of Rule and Rationality* (New York: Macmillan, 1968); Carl Wellman, *Challenge and Response; Justification in Ethics* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois Univ. Press, 1971); and David P. Gauthier, *Practical Reasoning; The Structure and Foundations of Prudential and Moral Arguments and Their Exemplification in Discourse* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1963).

In such studies, the participants are the natives, the observers, the expert scholar-reconstructors. The original form of participant-observer techniques was developed by the so-called Chicago School of symbolic interaction; it depended upon autobiographical recountings and interviews. As described by Blumer, chief among the Chicago School adherents, the techniques include general exploration (highly flexible scanning of the symbolic environment as recorded in life histories, diaries, letters, etc.) and more particular inspection (non-directive interviews with native participants). From these data, the researcher then writes up a research report which is essentially a "scientific translation" of life-facts into underlying symbolic structures.[18]

More systematic approaches to participant-observation research can be found in two other quarters — in the world of Garfinkel and the ethnomethodologists, and in the land of grounded theory charted by Glaser and Strauss. The ethnomethodologists, seeking to describe the methods of day-to-day decision-making and role-taking in social and institutional settings, use multi-faceted charting and sorting techniques to formulate "constructive analyses" (patterns of key social constructs, related one to another almost axiologically, so as to describe the rules of communication and decision-making in particular contexts). And, the proponents of grounded sociological theory, working with highly directed interviews and within controlled sampling/explanation-building/explanationtesting systems, employ techniques of "conversational analysis," self-reports, and categorization to build large-scale theories of social interaction, attempting both to pattern human exchanges and to account for those patterns.[19]

Participant-observation research techniques, of course, enjoy general popularity within the communications field; both "constructivism" and "conversational analysis" have been shed of their more purely sociological machinery and transformed into straight-forward tools for communication theory-building. Among rhetorical critics, however, these techniques have made only a minor impact. The major exception is some of the work on "fantasy theme" analysis done under Bormann at the University of Minnesota. Conversational analysis coupled occasionally with Q-methodology, for example, has been used to aid physician recruitment projects, to probe revolutionary consciousness, to generate "ideal" political

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[17] A useful discussion of the range of sociological theory and research currently comprehended by the term "qualitative" can be found in Schwartz and Jacobs (n. 14), esp. pp. 3-16.

[18] See Blumer, esp. Chapters 1 and 3. Cf. Schwartz and Jacobs, pp. 24-26, for an overview.

[19] See Garfinkel as well as the Turner anthology (n. 14). Cf. Schwartz and Jacobs, pp. 210-224. On grounded theory, see Barney C. Glaser and Anselm Strauss, *The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research* (Chicago: Aldine, 1967), as well Schwartz and Jacob's capsule treatment, pp. 26-32.

messages, and to deconstruct the Watergate tapes.[20]

In general, however, close textual analysis and deconstruction are not enjoying much play among rhetorical critics within the speech communication disciplines. Were these research methods grounded more clearly within a general dramaturgical framework rather than inside some of the Freudian assumptions underlying fantasy theme analysis, however, they might gain more interest and import.

Fantasy Theme Analysis and Criticism

While some of the scholarship produced under the aegis of fantasy theme analysis is essentially inductive-analytical, most of it is more purely "critical." By "critical" is meant studies which seek either to organize a series of events/persons/artifacts (with "drama" serving as either a convenient analogy or a source of critical vocabulary), or to evaluate actors' social-rhetorical-aesthetic performances within some social setting. The studies included under this head tend to be case studies written, at least in part, to assert the utility of dramaturgical perspectives (i.e., with metacritical overtones), although some represent event-centered studies which simply use rather than defend dramaturgical notions.

Briefly, fantasy theme analysis derives from two poles: a Freudian psychology which stresses "fantasizing" as an essential human need and activity, and a Balesian social psychology which finds fantasizing a common collective activity wherein groups of people recount mutually experienced events, in part for phatic and in part for hortatory and actuative reasons.[21] Methodologically, fantasy theme analysis seems governed by a three-step process: (1) the discovery of recurrent themes (usually in narrative or story forms) in an environment which allows them to "chain" out through persons living in it; (2) the "typing" of those themes (perhaps with the help of short-hand labels deriving from classical mythology, political ideology, and the like); and (3) the identification and explication of full-blown "rhetorical visions" (often in conflict with other visions, as competing explanations vie for control of popular conceptions, social action and implementation, etc.). The competing visions are seen as crucial social-political dramas; or, if a single vision dominates a realm or epoch, it is viewed as a religious or secular dream which vitalizes actions and accounts for the cognitive and attitudinal life of the community.

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[20] "Constructivism" as currently practiced within the speech-communication field is described in such review essays as Jesse C. Delia, "Constructivism and the Study of Human Communication," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 63 (1977), 66-83; C. Jack Orr, "How Shall We Say: 'Reality is Socially Constructed Through Communication?' " *Central States Speech Journal*, 29 (1978), 263-274; and Charles Arthur Willard, "A Reformulation of the Concept of Argument: The Constructivist/Interactionist Foundations of a Sociology of Argument," *Journal of the American Forensic Association*, 14 (1978), 121-140.

For a look at the sort of conversational analysis *cum* fantasy theme analysis emanating from the Minnesota work, see Stephen Nye Barton and John B. O'Leary, "The Rhetoric of Rural Physician Procurement Campaigns: An Application of Travistock," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 60 (1974), 144-154; James W. Chesebro, John F. Cragan, and Patricia W. McCullough, "The Small Group Technique of the Radical Revolutionary: A Synthetic Study of Consciousness Raising," *Speech Monographs*, 40 (1973), 136-146; John F. Cragan and Donald C. Shields, "Foreign Policy Communication Dramas: How Mediated Rhetoric Played in Peoria in Campaign '76," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 63 (1977), 274-289; and Laurinda W. Porter, "The White House Transcripts: Group Fantasy Events Concerning the Mass Media," *Central States Speech Journal*, 27 (1976), 272-279.

[21] Ernest G. Bormann, "Fantasy and Rhetorical Vision: The Rhetorical Criticism of Social Reality," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 58 (1972), 396-407.

Fantasy theme analysis has been used to study such diverse communicative events as the Eagleton Affair, popular romances, the 19th-century Disciples of Christ, and sermons "fetching good out of evil."[22] It has been suspect for its Freudian base, for its *post hoc* character (meaning that almost anything can be explained by it at least analogically), for its lack of systematic development of primary vocabulary (especially the theme/type/vision trilogy), for the difficulty in identifying the chaining process when dealing with society-wide events, and for its tendency toward subjectivistic treatments of themes and types.[23] Yet, its popularity as a critical method cannot be doubted: its very elasticity, while a vice to some, is also a virtue, for it presumably can treat sensibly any discourse relying principally upon narratives.

As yet, however, fantasy theme analysis is more closely associated with dramat*ism* than drama*turgy*. That is, it is primarily a critical tool for analyzing verbal discourse and mental constructs rather than an explicitly developed theory of human communication and social systems.

Burkean Criticism

The distinction between dramatism and dramaturgy particularly applies to Kenneth Burke. In attempting to characterize his view of dramatism, Burke has said, "Dramatism is a method of analysis and a corresponding critique of terminology designed to show that the most direct route to the study of human relations and human motives is via a methodological inquiry into cycles or clusters of terms and their functions."[24] The emphasis here upon "a method of analysis" and "critique of terminology" designed for "the study of human relations and human motives" is extremely important. While Burke's ideas can be used as constructs within systematic sociological, political, or literary theories, they have been developed primarily as critical tools. Thus, it is useful to distinguish the work of dramaturgical theorists from dramatistic critics.

Into that first category of Burkean studies go the work of such sociologists as Duncan and Klapp, such political scientists as Edelman, Graber, and Bennett, and such literary theorists-critics as Hyman, Rueckert, Knox, and Frank. Among rhetorical theorists, too, there is some attention to Burkean notions in theory-building efforts, although perhaps only Griffin has built an entire theory of human communication (in his case, of social movements) solely on Burke. To date, the most complete dramaturgical theory inspired by Burke (and Mead) belongs to Duncan, whose last book, *Symbols in Society*, was essentially an inventory of theoretical propositions. He organized his dramaturgical speculations around twelve "axiomatic propositions" on man, symbols, and hierarchy; twenty-four "theoretical propositions" relative to basic social institutions, hierarchical social roles and relationships, types of audiences, forms of address, and social victimage; and thirty-five "methodological propositions" concerning his particular version of Burke's Pentad, ways for analyzing the seven basic forms of social drama, methods for probing authority-audience interactions and educational systems (secular and sacred), and the importance of sociation (a la Simmel) in maintaining social order.[25]

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[22] Ernest G. Bormann, "The Eagleton Affair: A Fantasy Theme Analysis," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 59 (1973), 143-159; Virginia Kidd, "Happily Ever After and Other Relationship Styles: Advice on Interpersonal Relations in Popular Magazines, 1951-1973," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 61 (1975), 31-39; Carl Wayne Hensley, "Rhetorical Vision and the Persuasion of a Historical Movement: The Disciples of Christ in Nineteenth Century Culture," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 61 (1975), 250-264; Ernest G. Bormann, "Fetching Good Out of Evil: A Rhetorical Use of Calamity," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 63 (1977), 130-139.

[23] These and other critiques were offered at the Speech Communication Association Seminar devoted to fantasy theme analysis in 1978. The problems of the critics' subjectivist determination of categories, "in the absence of empirical objectivity," are treated thoroughly in Cragan and Shields, p. 274.

[24] Kenneth Burke, "Dramatism," in *The International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, ed. David L. Sills (New York: Macmillan, 1968), VII, 445.

Into the second category, "Burkeish" pieces of rhetorical criticism, goes a considerably larger and more diverse group of works. Various of Burke's writings have been hailed as "the" source of wisdom and method, and hence critical studies strike out in multiple directions. "Chart/prayer/dream" analysis, studies of "identification," "pentadic" analysis, "cluster-agon" descriptions, visions of "dialectical confrontation" and "motive," logological investigations — these and at least an equal number of other foci produce an eddy of scholarship awash with Burkean incantations. Indeed, the methodological options buried in Burke's nearly fifty years of output are so varied as to foreclose specific review here. At the most general level, about all that can be said is that (a) the gospel of Burke spreads unabated, and (b) a few core dramaturgical assumptions — that people "act" rather than "move," that the ascription of "motive" is perhaps the critic's primary obligation, that a multilayered analytical procedure (variously, chart /prayer/dream, grammatical/rhetorical/poetic, positive/dialectical/ultimate) should be followed by critics seeking full exploration of human actions, and that all human acts are purposive performances designed to express self and affect others — are visible in almost everything done in his name.

Dramaturgical Approaches to Ritual and Mass Communication

Beyond Burke exists an even greater diversity of critical studies done under the aegis of dramaturgy. Rooting themselves in Freudian notions of infantilism and fantasy, psychiatrists have used dramaturgical critiques as tools for group and culture-wide diagnoses. Sociologists have studied the American funeral, vaginal examinations, organizational life, and the "mutual pretence" of dying. Political scientists employ notions of performance and enactment to analyze political socialization, campaigning, legitimation and leadership, political conflict, and the ritualization of state executions in "open" and "concealed" societies. Cultural anthropologists investigate the performance or enactment of social roles and norms by reconstructing the ''scripts'' or ''codes'' underlying such activities as eating, participating in a Balinese cockfight, and worshipping. And, in the widest possible preview, entire cultures — their art forms, architecture, use of history, and communicative media — have been surveyed so as to better understand how uniformity of collective perception is created.[26] At the macro-social level, in other words, dramaturgical studies with their emphasis upon ''what'' is acted out ''how'' by ''whom'' are invading most traditional disciplines.

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[25] Most of these scholars already have been mentioned in other footnotes. But, in addition, see: Doris A. Graber, *Verbal Behavior and Politics* (Urbana, Il.: Univ. of Illinois Press, 1976); W. Lance Bennett, *The Political Mind and the Political Environment: An Investigation of Public Opinion and Political Consciousness*, Lexington Books (Lexington, Mass.: D. C. Heath, 1975); Stanley Edgar Hyman, *The Armed Vision; A Study in the Methods of Modern Literary Criticism*, Vintage Book, rev. ed. (1947; rev. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1955); William H. Rueckert, ed., *Critical Responses to Kenneth Burke* (Minneapolis: Univ. of Minnesota Press, 1969); George Knox, *Critical Moments: Kenneth Burke's Categories and Critiques* (Seattle: Univ. of Washington Press, 1957); Armin Paul Frank, *Kenneth Burke* (New York: Twayne, 1969); Leland M. Griffin, "A Dramatistic Theory of the Rhetoric of Movements," in Rueckert.

Within the realm of more strictly communication studies, two bodies of critical research currently appear to be emerging. One group of studies is concentrating upon ''construc*tionist*'' (vis-à-vis ''construc*tivist*'') thought. Drawing upon the speculations of such scholars as Schutz, Berger, Luckmann, and others, these studies tend to view communication processes as epistemic — as creative of all perceptual processes, mental categories, judgmental tendencies, springs to action — and, more narrowly, rhetorical processes as collective expressions and enactments of community beliefs, attitudes, and values. After discussions of the ways in which communication/rhetoric ''constructs'' or ''constrains'' our collective view of ourselves and our world, critics in this vein dissect the ''myths'' which control perception and action (e.g., McGuire and McGee), the ''mystifications'' which imprison an entire people in a subordinate relation to another society (e.g., Woodward), the ''ideologies'' and ''ideographs'' which gain attributive and expressive power in our lives (again McGee), and the ''legitimations'' which are appealed to in our political dramas (e.g., Trent and Farrell).[27] Methodologically, these studies are applicative and explanatory: a dramaturgical or performative theory is asserted, and then it is applied to communicative phenomena so as to rationalize a sequence of communicative or rhetorical behaviors.

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[26] See the psychiatrists mentioned in n. 2, as well as Lloyd De Mause, ''Jimmy Carter and American Fantasy,'' *Journal of Psychohistory*, 5 (1977), 151-175, David R. Beisel, ''Toward a Psychohistory of Jimmy Carter,'' ibid., 143-159, and John J. Hartmen, ''Carter and the Utopian Group-Fantasy,'' ibid., 239-258. Among the sociologists, see R. E. Turner and C. Edgley, ''Death as Theatre: Dramaturgical Analysis of the American Funeral,'' *Sociology and Social Research*, 60 (1976), 377-392; J. M. Henslin and M. A. Biggs, ''Dramaturgical Desexualization: The Sociology of the Vaginal Examination,'' in *Sociology of Sex*, ed. J. M. Henslin and E. Sagarin (New York: Schocken Books, 1978), pp. 141-170; Victor Thompson, ''Dramaturgy: The Dramaturgical Aspect of Organizations,'' in Combs and Mansfield, pp. 329-337 (orig. pub. in *Modern Organizations* [New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1963]); and Barney C. Glaser and Anselm L. Strauss, ''The Ritual Drama of Mutual Pretense,'' ibid., pp. 359-368 (orig. pub. in their *Awareness of Dying* [Chicago: Aldine, 1965]). Among political studies, see R. M. Merelman, ''Development of Political Ideology — A Framework for the Analysis of Political Socialization,'' *American Political Science Review*, 63 (1969), esp. 750; Richard M. Merelman, ''The Dramaturgy of Politics,'' in Combs and Mansfield, pp. 285-301 (orig. pub. *Sociological Quarterly*, 10 [1969]); both of Edelman's books, already cited; Bennett (n. 25); and Lofland (n. 2). For more purely ''scenic'' studies of politics, see Henry S. Kariel, ''Making Scenes in a Liberal Society,'' *Massachusetts Review*, 11 (1970), 223-255, Elizabeth Burns, *Theatricality: A Study of Convention in the Theatre and in Social Life* (New York: Harper and Row, 1972), and David Caute, *The Illusion: An Essay on Politics, Theatre, and the Novel* (New York: Harper and Row, 1971); the campaign studies mentioned in n. 2 are also applicable here.

[27] Michael McGuire, ''Mythic Structure in *Mein Kampf*: A Structuralist Critique,'' *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 63 (1977), 1-13, and Michael C. McGee, ''In Search of 'The People': A Rhetorical Alternative,'' *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 61 (1975), 235-249. Gary C. Woodward, ''Mystifications in the Rhetoric of Cultural Dominance and Colonial Control,'' *Central States Speech Journal*, 26 (1975), 298-303. Michael Calvin McGee, ''The 'Ideograph': A Link Between Rhetoric and Ideology,'' *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 66 (1980), 1-17, as well as his ''The Origins of 'Liberty': A Feminization of Power,'' *Communication Monographs*, 47 (1980), 23-45. For Trent and Farrell, see n. 2.

A second group of studies, being carried forward by mass communications scholars, is even more purely dramaturgical in vocabulary. Grounded partially in the play theories of Huizinga and Stephenson and partially in the emerging field of television criticism, a substantial group of researchers is seeking to understand "media events" such as spectacles, specials, and more everyday television happenings. Concerned with the power of television to create "occasions" and to legitimize or make culturally relevant such TV spectaculars as the Super Bowl, Watergate Hearings, and the Sadat-Begin summit meetings, many of these scholars have been assembling at the Annenberg School of Communications at the University of Southern California for the past two years in an attempt to hammer out some theoretical foundations for their ideas and to illustrate them with case studies. Most of these are as yet unpublished, but they promise to add considerable force to dramaturgical theories of mass communication.[28]

In summary, if the various "-isms" and "-ologies" lurking in the footnotes to this essay are raided, an amazingly rich and variegated set of research methods available to the rhetorical and/or communication analyst interested in using dramaturgical social theory are found. As suggested earlier, very few studies in our journals actually organize their key constructs around the *word* "dramaturgy," although, obviously, dramaturgical conceptions of social life and processes burble beneath the surface critical language. The participant-observation techniques allow researchers to dig deeply and systematically into "texts"; the fantasy theme methodology bids the specification of sources of wholesale cultural *mythoi* and visions; Burkean concepts explicate the ways in which human motives are encoded and lived out in messages; and, the macroscopic investigations of interpersonal constructions, their ritualizations and expressions, lead steadily toward a "grand theory" of society as formed, enacted, and regulated by communication/rhetorical processes.

THE STATE OF THE ART (OR SCIENCE?)

This overview has been, in part, an exercise in vocabulary-building, and in part a selective journey through relevant scholarship. Because the purpose has been one of review rather than of critique, little in the way of calculated evaluation has been offered. So, it seems appropriate to conclude this state-of-the-art venture with a few reflections on the current status and future promise of dramaturgical theory and criticism.

1. Thus far, *"dramaturgy" comprehends an as-yet incomplete theory of society and social interaction*. Urging that "the study of man — whether literary, philosophical, or sociological — is at root an effort to define an image of man that

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[28] In addition to Huizinga (n. 14), see: William Stephenson, *The Play Theory of Mass Communication* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1967); Michael R. Real, *Mass-Mediated Culture* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1977); Richard Carpenter, "Rituals, Aesthetics, and TV," *Journal of Popular Culture*, 3 (1969), 251-259; Harold L. Nieburg, *Culture Storm: Politics and the Ritual Order* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1973). The Annenberg School's conference on "media events," including a list of participants and their topics, is described in *Record: The Annenberg School of Communications at the University of Southern California* (1979), pp. 3-4.

'locates' him in the world," and that dramaturgy "attempts to bridge the gap between the social sciences and the humanities by deriving its root metaphor from one of the most characteristic of all human enterprises, the theatre," Combs and Mansfield push excitedly for acceptance of the series of epistemological and ontological propositions with which this essay began.[29] Yet, they conclude their anthology still unsure of the theoretical status of that root metaphor. They see the existentialists' and communications scholars' visions of life performances as together consecrating the philosophical base of dramaturgical theory; but, they can only recognize that theory as an "understandable" impulse, not, as yet, as a systematic set of covering propositions.[30] At a theoretical or even pre-theoretical level, then, dramaturgy is incomplete.

2. *The central ontological question — Are we treating an analogy or a 'real' state-of-affairs? — still haunts the research.* Messinger's critique is unanswered, as are others.[31] One must remember that many of the "-isms" and "-ologies" weaving their ways through our footnotes arose in protest to positivist science and rationalism. Symbolic interactionism, ethnomethodology and grounded theory, constructivism and constructionism, ethnography, qualitative sociology and political science — all these, especially, were reactive intellectual movements which hit their strides during the foment of the 1960's. In some ways, they were as much political as intellectual responses to discontent in the academic community. Sober reflection over their ontic status is only now occurring, and hence the analogy-vs.-reality question is only now being asked. We still are in a state of intellectual ennui.

3. Having recognized some ambiguities, however, *the applicative utility of dramaturgy can be affirmed.* At the risk of offering a woefully incomplete list of new questions and old problems, the following suggest some of those applications.

(a) The idea of pre-existent scripts and accompanying standards-of-performance can help generic critics comprehend antecedent forms and explain public reactions to 4th of July oratory, inaugural addresses, sermons, etc.

(b) If audiences are conceptualized as participant-spectators rather than as targets, they then are viewed as co-rhetors, as meaning-builders in rhetorical transactions. "Audience-centeredness" takes on richer associations in dramaturgical than in many other rhetorical theories.

(c) Theatrical metaphors should aid in probing more systematically those rhetorical occasions characterized by multiple audiences. Multiple audiences are often conceptualized in terms of layers or of varied belief-attitude-value complexes, for example, in studies of political conflict and exchange.[32] Within a dramaturgical framework, however, varied audiences *use* discourse in different ways, depending upon their social roles and their "distance" from the action. Just as Burke has analyzed the *agons*, the other inhabitants of the immediate "universe," and the spectators of plays as three different audiences putting the utterances of dramatic personae to varied uses (one group, to destroy; a second, to respond; and a third to celebrate), so, too, can rhetorical critics explore political arenas. Such an examination of, say, political conventions would ask for the specification of the varied roles of specific political antagonists, of the political activists comprising the immediate ratifying audience of party faithful, and of the societal spectators watching the convention via television. All three groups "hear" and "see" the "same" messages, but because all three have differing roles in the drama and its presentation, they are employing the discourse to different ends.[13]

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[29] Combs and Mansfield, pp. xv,vii.

[30] Combs and Mansfield, p. 430.

[31] See Messinger as well as Wilshire (n. 5). Additional critiques of concepts reviewed here can be found in Schwartz and Jacobs, esp. pp. 369-377; Orr (n. 20); and Keith Adler, "On the Falsification of Rules Theories," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 64 (1978), 427-438.

[32] See, e.g., Michael Prosser, "Stevenson's United Nations Audiences," *Central States Speech Journal*, 16 (1965), 262-271; Craig R. Smith, "The Republican Keynote Address of 1968: Adaptive Rhetoric for the Multiple Audience," *Western Speech*, 39 (1975), 32-39; J. Robert Cox, "The Rhetoric of Child Labor Reform: An Efficacy-Utility Analysis," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 60 (1974), 359-370; Forest L. Whan, "Stephen A. Douglas' Audience and Occasion," in *Rhetorical Criticism: Methods and Models*, ed. J. A. Hendrix and Jerome B. Polisky (Dubuque, Ia.: Wm. C. Brown, 1968), pp. 66-85.

(d) Perhaps the most important concept — at least for traditionally trained rhetorical critics — coming out of dramaturgy is "enactment." Because the notion of enactment bids researchers to investigate "latent meanings" produced, not so much in what is said, as in *the act of* saying, it drives them into deep-structure or non-discursive rhetorical processes. To be sure, in the 1960s concern with nonverbal symbols began with the burning of flags, with street demonstrations, etc. Those symbols, however, were looked at as icons, as things-or-events imbued with meaning in and of themselves. Little was done in the way of treating nonverbal behaviors, symbol-rich objects in environments, behaviorally complex rituals, and the like, as full-blown "codes" or "languages" — each with its own "grammar" and "vocabulary," each with its own potentials for reinforcement and persuasion.[14] The mere fact of doing something can be as "rhetorical" as the words said during the action; witness the tendency of journalists to anticipate the first presidential news conference in several months as a sign of renewed presidential self-confidence, or the untotaled hours the American public spends watching — participating in — the funeral of fallen leaders. The enactment of core myths or ideological tenets binds people together in secular and sacred liturgies. Rhetorical critics can do much to help the entire intellectual community unravel everyday and special rituals and performances and to specify their effects. And, dramaturgical theory has suggested the aspects of enactment processes worth analyzing.

4. Finally, *dramaturgy will come into its own, ultimately, only when the communications field works on it seriously*. Combs and Mansfield almost plead with communication scholars to help.[15] Communication researchers presumably represent within academia that group of scholars most sensitive to symbols and symbolization, and, as has been illustrated again and again in this essay, "symbols" and "communication" are the *sine qua non* of dramaturgy. Someone, however, must forge the missing conceptual-critical vocabulary and must apply it with sensitivity to discoursing understood both broadly and narrowly. Self-con-

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[13] Kenneth Burke, "Antony on Behalf of the Play," in his *The Philosophy of Literary Form: Studies in Symbolic Action*, rev. ed. abridged (1941; New York: Vintage Books, 1957), pp.279-290; and his "Form and Persecution in the *Oresteia*," in *Language as Symbolic Action*, pp. 125-138.

[14] Rationales for "code-building" studies can be found in Geertz (n. 11) as in Roland Barthes, "Myth Today," in *Mythologies*, trans. Annette Lavers (New York: Hill and Wang, 1972), pp. 109-159.

[15] Combs and Mansfield, p. 430.

scious definitional exercises and analytical investigations of communicative artifacts have been practiced since the 6th century B.C., and hence can play a unique role in the development of dramaturgical theories of social systems.

The mission of dramaturgists is both to understand social dynamics and to advise those who participate in those interactions, to unmask the players in order to improve their performances. The call is clear, especially to us.

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A Note on Theory and Practice in Rhetorical Criticism

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The subject of theory and practice mandates attention to the "problem of mediation," to the intersections between thought and action, idea and will, conception and execution. One cannot deal cohesively with the relationship between theory and practice without focusing on the psychological process of criticism, on the critic's own motives, means and ends, on his relationships with his characteristic perspectives on the one hand, and with the critical object on the other. Hence, these observations concerning theory and practice in rhetorical criticism must be concerned at least as much with critics as with criticism.[1]

It is commonsensical to hold that the character of a critique is shaped by its theoretical presuppositions. Virtually all the essays contiguous to this one demonstrate, in one way or another, how fateful a theoretical commitment is to the activity of criticism. The burden in this essay, therefore, is not to document further that already well established connection. Instead, the intent is to explore a few of the implications attending two conceptions of the relationship between the practice of rhetorical criticism and rhetorical theory: a conception that fuses theory and practice, and a conception that divorces them. The linguist Kenneth Pike provided the textual basis of this exploration in an essay that was principally concerned with the descriptive reconstruction of obscure and remote language systems.[2] His account of two standpoints — the etic and emic — for the description of behavior has proved to have been suggestive in fields other than linguistics, and it may also have a certain limited utility in rhetorical criticism as well.

Pike wrote that "The etic viewpoint studies behavior as from outside of a particular system, and as an essential initial approach to an alien system. The emic viewpoint results from studying behavior as from inside the system."[3]

It can be argued that there are perspectives on rhetorical criticism that correspond rather exactly to the etic and emic approaches to the study of linguistic systems. These corresponding perspectives on criticism are, respectively, the theoretic or etic viewpoint, which approaches a rhetorical transaction from outside of that transaction and interprets the transaction in terms of a pre-existing theory; and the non-theoretic or nominalistic or emic viewpoint, which approaches a rhetorical transaction in what is hoped to be its own terms, without conscious expectations drawn from any sources other than the rhetorical transaction itself.

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[1] The relationship between the rhetorical critic and his or her work has received scant attention. Among the very few statements on the subject are Philip Wander and Steven Jenkins, "Rhetoric, Society, and the Critical Response," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 58 (1972), 441-450; and Lawrence W. Rosenfield, "The Experience of Criticism," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 60 (1974), 489-496.

[2] Kenneth L. Pike, "Etic and Emic Standpoints for the Description of Behavior," in *Communication and Culture: Readings in the Codes of Human Interaction*, ed. Alfred G. Smith (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1966), pp. 152-163.

[3] Ibid., p. 152.

The etic critic, holding that rhetorical discourses, or at least clusters of them, are essentially similar and that their similarities are either descriptively summarized or archetypally idealized in one or another theoretical formulation, proceeds to the task of criticism a prioristically. The etic procedure presupposes that what is known in rhetoric is embodied in rhetorical theory, and that what is not known — in the case of criticism, the interpretation of a particular rhetorical transaction — is to be apprehended only through what is known.

The emic critic, on the other hand, holding that rhetorical transactions themselves constitute the chief source of knowledge in the field of rhetoric and the sole defensible ground for its theoretical formulations, proceeds to the task of criticism with a willing suspension of will itself, seeking to coax from the critical object its own essential form of disclosure.

One perspective on rhetorical criticism — the etic — holds that theory is to practice as means are to ends. The other perspective — the emic — holds that theory is to practice as ends are to means. This formulation seems fairly to summarize the fundamental difference between the two orientations.

The etic orientation has rhetorical theory constituting the means or objective of the critical enterprise. Hence, an etic critic[4] would undertake a general activity in order to achieve a discrete nominalistic objective. In sum, etic criticism applies general ideas for the purpose of illuminating specific rhetorical transactions.

The emic orientation, on the other hand, has the activity of criticism instrumental to the attainment of rhetorical theory. Hence, an emic critic would undertake a discrete, nominalistic activity for the sake of a general objective. Emic criticism does not view the understanding of particular transactions as the end or fulfillment of criticism. Rather, such understanding would acquire intellectual respectability only as it moved toward or issued in general truths about human experience. To the extent that emic criticism was particular in its implications, to that extent it would be, in its own terms, deficient in importance.

My account so far of the etic-emic distinction in rhetorical criticism has been partial. That is: the distinction is as clean and disparate as I can manage, and I have deliberately left out of this account any consideration of grey areas — any consideration of approaches to criticism that might compromise or reconcile or consolidate the etic and emic. The omission is in part for the purpose of inquiry, but it is also in part because these two approaches to criticism are not very easy to amalgamate. The distinction between them is considerable. Nonetheless, I have to grant that just as Pike regards the etic and emic viewpoints in linguistics as shading into one another,[5] so too — at least in principle — there are circumstances in rhetorical criticism when the two perspectives may be assimilated to one another. I happen to believe that such circumstances are comparatively rare, but that is another argument. For the present, each of the approaches solicits our consideration. First, the etic, or "theoretic" approach.

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[4] I must apologize for the phrase "etic critic." It sounds like something invented by a cicada. The term "etic" is not derived from "theoretic," although they are related in the present account. Pike wrote, "I coined the words etic and emic from the words phonetic and phonemic, following the conventional linguistic usage of these latter terms" (p. 152).

[5] Ibid., pp. 152 and 157.

It seems that there are two sets of problems associated with the etic approach to rhetorical criticism — associated, in other words, with the decision to interpret a rhetorical transaction in terms of a pre-existing theoretical formulation — say, neo-Aristotelianism of fantasy theme analysis or argumentational analysis or Marxist analysis, or whatever. Irrespective of the particular theory to which the would-be critic adheres, there is one set of problems bearing on the practice of criticism, and another set of problems bearing on rhetorical theory.

A problem of applying any pre-existing theory to the interpretation of a rhetorical transaction is that the critic is disposed to find exactly what he or she expected to find. The epistemological constraints imposed by a theoretical orientation inhibit critics from seeing new things, from making new discoveries. Such criticism tends much more to be a confirmation than an inquiry. It is, in the strictest sense, a *prejudice*.

It is significant that there is not a single case in the literature of our field in which a rhetorical theory has been abandoned as a result of having failed an application in criticism. Etic criticism never discredits theories. It only confirms them. And that may be because the etic approach to rhetorical criticism is continuously attended by the fallacy of question-begging. The critic begins with a fixed idea about how a rhetorical transaction is to be apprehended; apprehends it in accordance with that fixed idea and in no other way; and then, the apprehension having been achieved, the fixed idea is regarded as having been confirmed. The system is infallible. But it is also sterile. It is detached from the phenomenal data of our field. Like some medieval dispute among deductionist clerics, it speaks to no one outside the fraternity. And in the long run, rhetorical theory itself is ill served by etic criticism.

Consider the limited ways in which a rhetorical theory may be grounded. A rhetorical theory may be grounded in logically necessary propositions, as I suppose Perelman has tried to demonstrate, or Johnstone.[6] These are significant achievements, but such theories have a decidedly limited relevance to criticism because they typically — and perhaps necessarily — deal only with a few features of rhetorical transactions, and then more in terms of constraints than of explicably recurrent patterns. Or, a rhetorical theory may be grounded in a view of the psychological regularities that bear upon rhetorical transactions, as fantasy theme analysis purports to be, or the old James-Lange theory of persuasion as adapted to our field by Winans.[7] But inasmuch as rhetorical transactions are themselves a major source of information about such psychological regularities — and about situational regularities as well — it seems as though criticism would stand much more to inform this sort of rhetorical theory than to be informed by it. Or, finally, a rhetorical theory may be grounded in and its constituents be general propositions about the mass of rhetorical transactions that occur in the world. But if that is to be our conception of a rhetorical theory, than theory is something that logically and temporally *follows* criticism — it does not precede it.

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[6] Chaim Perelman and L. Olbrechts-Tyteca, *The New Rhetoric: A Treatise on Argumentation* (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1969); Henry W. Johnstone, *Philosophy, Rhetoric and Argumentation*, ed. with Maurice Natanson (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1965), pp. 1-9, 126-134, 138-148, and "From Philosophy to Rhetoric and Back," *Rhetoric, Philosophy, and Literature: An Exploration*, ed. Don M. Burks (West Lafayette: Purdue University Press), pp. 49-66.

[7] Ernest G. Bormann, "Fantasy and Rhetorical Vision: The Rhetorical Criticism of Social Reality," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 58 (1972), 396-407; James Albert Winans, *Public Speaking* (Ithaca: Sewell, 1915), esp. pp. 249-395.

And, that brings as to emic criticism — to criticism that interprets its object on the object's own terms. Here let me be explicit that I am confining my remarks about the emic approach to the *interpretive* phase of criticism only. I don't believe that a critic should *evaluate* an object emically, but an emic *interpretation* may be an avenue into a fair and full etic evaluation.

A complication with emic criticism arises in connection with the good faith of the critic. Here is an approach to criticism in which, as a prerequisite to the interpretation of an object, the critic will undertake to see the object on its own terms — to see it with the utmost sympathy and compassionate understanding. This sympathetic explication is, of course, only a phase in the process of critical engagement. The emic critic may, and probably will, proceed from sympathy to distance, from the suspension of judgment to the rendering of judgment. But at some moment — probably early — in his or her engagement with an object, the emic critic will aspire to so sympathetic an account that the critic's audience will understand that object as, in some sense, *inevitable*. Only then will the emic critic be in a position to judge the object, for only then would the critic have fully disclosed what it is that is the subject of judgment.

Perhaps it would be suggestive to view the paradigmatic figures for etic and emic criticism as, respectively, the jurist and the psychoanalyst. The jurist has available a body of law and precedent, corresponding to the theoretical referent of etic criticism, to which he subjects matters that are presented for adjudication. That body of law and precedent is preordained, and although there is room for a clever jurist to be supple and innovative in applying the law — and, indeed, the law itself offers some latitude, i.e., leaves some things to his judgment — the jurist still is obliged to see events juridically, to conform his perceptions and interpretations to the body of pre-established law. Analogically, the etic critic seeks to conform the interpretation of a rhetorical transaction to the shape of his theoretical stance. The critic may, in principle, modify the theory by his application of it, just as a jurist may sometimes make "new law," but in each case, a mosaic of established precedents is imprinted on the object of judgment.

The psychoanalyst, on the other hand, seeks motives that he anticipates will be contingent, will pertain to the particular case because they are discovered in the particular case. The psychoanalyst's training and experience instruct him in where to look, but not in what to see. His hypotheses about where to look (e.g., at formative early experiences or parental relationships) give impetus to his explanation, but what he is to see requires disclosure and ultimate confirmation from the subject of the analysis, the analysand.[8] Analogically, the emic critic may well have *topoi* in which to begin his exploration, but the critical object is the source and ultimately the confirmation of the form that the criticism may take.

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[8] See, for example, Sigmund Freud, "On Psychotherapy," *Collected Papers of Sigmund Freud* (London: Hogarth Press, 1949), I, 261-262; *A General Introduction to Psychoanalysis* (New York: Garden City, 1943), pp. 253ff.

Psychoanalysis is, of course, a theory. But it is a theory whose cornerstone is a myth — the oedipal myth. The law, on the other hand, is a code, a network of shalt-nots. I hope it is not too pretentious to suggest that the two paradigms represent two ways of understanding human experience. In the story of Moses coming down from Sinai with the Law, we have a fusion of the two modes and a demonstration of their complementarity: the transaction between Moses, as the representative of Israel, and God is the myth; the Tablets of the Law contain the code. And the story lends itself to emphasis of one or the other mode — to the covenant between Israel and God, or to the Law on which that convenant hinges.

If we had to give names to these two modes of understanding, we might well call the mode that subsumes etic criticism the enthymematic, and the mode that subsumes emic criticism the mythic. The enthymematic mode, which is categorical and static, has judgment as its subject and the syllogism as its form. The mythic mode, which is provisional and kinetic, has history as its subject and the syllogism as its form.

There have been serious efforts to embody the mythic mode in a theoretical formulation for purposes of criticism, notably in Burke's dramatism,[9] and Bormann's fantasy theme analysis.[10] Considered solely as instrumentalities for criticism, both efforts have had mixed results. Each begins promisingly with the expectation that a static taxonomy will not suffice to account for phenomena so mutable and unstable as rhetorical transactions, and each ends by sponsoring a taxonomy. Burke's dramatistic theory yields a finite inventory of ratios: a pentad that Burke, the improvisatory critic, rarely uses, but that would-be Burkeans have applied all too literally. And fantasy theme analysis, by anticipating prior to inspection the course of a belief, and by imposing on all of its subjects a categorical scheme that is reductive in its power of description, sometimes has yielded criticism that seems formulary and predictable. Both theories excited great interest by taking drama seriously as a modality of criticism. Both theories converted generative insights into taxonomical schemata, and so did not take drama seriously enough.

Perhaps a reconciliation between the etic and emic approachs to criticism can be found not in the direction of formulating emic criticism into an etic theory, but rather in focusing on some implications of each approach to the critic. The same crucial issue applies both to the relationship between the critic and his method and to the relationship between the critic and his subject. That issue is the degree to which the critic has temporarily effaced himself and become the faithful instrument of transmission either of a method or of a subject. If the etic critic — or, perhaps, the critic in an etic phase of criticism — is excessively detached from his method, the critique may be mechanical, unsubtle — deficient as criticism.[11] And if the emic critic — or the critic in an emic phase of criticism — is excessively detached from his subject, the critique may be uncomprehending, doctrinaire — deficient as criticism. In either case, the deficiency may be rectified only by the critic's extending himself, risking himself, not possessing a method but being possessed by it: mastering a subject by yielding to it.

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[9] Kenneth Burke, *A Grammar of Motives* (New York: Prentice-Hall, 1952), pp. x-xvi, 3-20.

[10] Bormann.

[11] This theme is expanded upon in my "Author's Foreward," *Rhetorical Criticism: A Study in Method* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1978), pp. ix-xv.

It is the nature of rhetorical discourses that they demand commitments — sometimes total commitments — commitments about what is real and what is good and what is obligatory and what is necessary. And that is why rhetorical criticism is not an enterprise for triflers. To the extent that a rhetorical critic works in good faith, he abandons himself to the requirements of an idea or to the texture of an alien experience. In more senses than one, the critic is an actor.

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Interpretation and the Art of the Rhetorical Critic

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The purposes of this essay are both diagnostic and prescriptive. The diagnosis involves an attempt to locate a few common themes that recur throughout this issue. In some measure, this task is no more than a summary of ideas developed in the preceding pages, but as these ideas are isolated and connected with one another, an argumentative configuration begins to emerge. The authors represented here find evidence of health and vigor in the field, but a comparative reading of their essays indicates that the art suffers from a set of related problems. These problems are expressed in terms of confusion about the relationship between theory and practice, complaints about methods that lose contact with the object of study, and warnings about the mechanical imposition of *a priori* categories on rhetorical artifacts. The second purpose is to find a cure for these maladies, and Edwin Black's brief but important essay provides the focus for this inquiry. Black's polemic against "etic criticism" summarizes earlier concerns about the state of art and throws them into conceptual relief. A critical analysis of that argument suggests implications that extend beyond the original formulation of the issue and that force a reconsideration of conventional assumptions about the role of theory in rhetorical criticism. Both diagnosis and prescription, however, depend upon some knowledge of the case history of the patient. We cannot understand the meaning of the essays collected here or the direction in which they are leading us until we read them in the context of the recent history of rhetorical criticism. And for this reason, the symposium on criticism published in this journal in 1957 offers an appropriate point of departure.

In assessing the quality of critical practice, the participants in the 1957 symposium present a uniformly pessimistic diagnosis of the situation. Almost all assert that the existing state of criticism is unhealthy and that strong correctives are necessary. Thus, Bryant proposes a reassessment of the role of style in rhetorical criticism and quickly adds that reassessment "cannot but imply enhancement, for hardly could there lie occasion at present to further depress the repute of style or to relegate style to a more distant peripheral position than it has achieved in most professional rhetorical speculations."[1] He finds that critics sometimes attend to the mechanics of stylistic analysis, "but almost always they back away from the central questions or strike them but glancing blows in the twilight."[2] Other authors extend Bryant's gloom beyond the canon of style. Baskerville complains of having to wade through "a spate of undistinguished, unimaginative 'critical studies.' "[3]

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[1] Donald C. Bryant, "Of Style," *Western Speech*, 21 (1957), 103.

[2] Ibid., 104.

[3] Barnet Baskerville, "Selected Writings on the Criticism of Public Address," *Western Speech*, 21 (1957), 117.

Clark concludes that existing practice has yielded "a criticism that adheres too closely to its formal topoi; it is frequently stereotyped, occasionally banal."[4] Hockmuth argues that a reading of contemporary criticism would lead to the conclusion that there is virtually only one approach open to the critic. The result of this monism is unfortunate, not only because of the lack of options, but also because the standard system results in "Aristotelian rhetoric read out of the context of Aristotle," and thus encourages the "practice of seizing upon the more mechanical aspects of the lore."[5] Redding maintains that the criticism of the period moves the critic out of, rather than more deeply into, his or her own subject. Unwittingly caught up in the neo-positivism of an earlier generation of literary scholars, rhetoricians preoccupy themselves with a factual, historical, and extrinsic approach to criticism. The central datum of the enterprise, the text, is shunted to the side: "Putting the matter bluntly, is not some re-examination in order when we find, upon examining twenty-five representative papers published since 1940, that about three-fourths of the space is typically devoted to historical and biographical information, with sometimes as little as one-tenth alotted to rhetorical analysis of speeches?"[6]

All told, the 1957 symposium presents an impressive catalogue of woes besetting the field of rhetorical criticism. The details of the lament, having been repeated *ad nauseam* during the past two decades, are now thoroughly familiar and need not detain us here. Yet, the general attitude of these critics of criticism is remarkable in itself and important as a sign of later developments in the field. The frequency and strength of attacks on the *status quo* betoken not so much an attempt to reform the system as an urge to move outside of it entirely. This urge, moreover, expresses itself in terms of a consistent pattern. Three steps are involved: (1) The process begins with comments that deplore the existing state of criticism; for the most part, critical studies are dismissed as mechanical, unimaginative, and complete. (2) The deficiency in critical practice is linked with deficiencies in method; the field is in bondage to a single method, and that method obscures the critic's vision of the text by deflecting attention to the historical background and by filtering the critic's perception through a set of static categories. (3) The correlation between problems of critical method and critical practice gradually emerges as a cause/effect relationship; deficient method is the cause, deficient practice the result. Consequently, the solution to the problem appears to lie in developing new methods that provide alternatives to the tyranny of the old approach and that remedy its theoretical defects.

In the 1957 symposium, Bryant is the only contributor who departs from this pattern. While he diagnoses the situation in the same way as the other authors, he breaks ranks at the third and final stage of process by proposing a solution that rejects more theory as a corrective to the deficiencies of existing theory. He seems, in fact, to distance himself from any systematically articulated method, preferring (by implication) to rely on the ingenuity of the critic and an absorbing concentration on the particular object of study. Thus, when Bryant defines style as the order and movement given to thought, he suggests that the analysis of style brings the critic directly in contact with the rhetorical workings of the text. Moreover, he insists that such analysis cannot depend on a "blue-print" or on a "check-list of devices." An inventory of these devices is useful, but it is merely a tool, for the essence of style is the way it functions within a particular discourse. And in confronting this issue, all *a priori* categories and theoretical constructs fade into the background: "When the critic comes to grips with his subject, no Buffon or Hochmuth, no Oppenheimer or Reynolds, can prescribe for him the emphasis and proportions which the several critical categories ought to assume in his analysis. With the aid of such resources as he can muster, he must strive to see the speech for what it was and what it is. He will listen to the voice of the theorist, but he will look at the phenomena through his own eyes."[7] The language here calls to mind Black's description of "emic criticism." And while Bryant's formulation of the approach is sketchy, it certainly constitutes a reasonable response to the problem as he and most other critics of the period conceived it. If criticism suffers from the mechanistic application of theory to particular cases, a shift in focus to the rhetorical texture of the particular work seems a potentially effective antidote.

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[4] Robert D. Clark, "Lessons from the Literary Critics," *Western Speech*, 21 (1957), 84.
[5] Marie Hochmuth, "Burkeian Criticism," *Western Speech*, 21 (1957), 89.
[6] W. Charles Redding, "Extrinsic and Intrinsic Criticism," *Western Speech*, 21 (1957), 100.

Whatever the merits or liabilities of Bryant's position, however, it was, and still remains, a minority view. The other contributors to the 1957 symposium regard the problem not in terms of the limitations of theory, but in terms of the limitations of the theory then in vogue. Thus, they all look for a different theoretical perspective, and they all obtain it by searching through another shelf in the academic cabinet. Clark, for example, relies on literary theory as a model; Hochmuth presents a more specific and more useful model based on the works of Kenneth Burke; Redding turns to the method of content analysis developed in the social sciences; and Nilsen seeks to ground rhetorical interpretation in ethical theory.[8] These speculations anticipate the main line of development in the field for the next two decades. The outburst of revisionism in the sixties and seventies follows the sentiment and often the pattern of these earlier essays. For twenty years a substantial portion of the critical literature enacts the same ritual: anathematize traditional practice and method, sanctify a new theoretical approach (usually borrowed from another discipline), and, if possible, incarnate the newly risen faith by imposing it on some artifact. This quest for the critic's Grail manifests itself in a bewildering variety of forms — in the attempt to refine a dramatistic or sociological base for the rhetoric of movements, in the proliferation of Burkean criticism, in the call for a more scientific form of criticism, in the rise of generic studies, and in a dozen other less well developed angles of theoretical vision.[9] In more recent years, while the mortification of neo-Aristotelian sin disappears from the process, the hope for rebirth through conversion to an alien god continues, with critics variously seeking enlightenment through social-psychological, dramaturgical, phenomenological, or structuralist theory.

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[7] Bryant, 110.

[8] Thomas R. Nilsen, "Interpretative Function of the Critic," *Western Speech*, 21 (1957), 70-76. In raising the issue of interpretation in criticism, Nilsen pursued a point developed later in the essay. The two approaches, however, are considerably different, since Nilsen emphasizes the interpretation of the ethical and logical implications of rhetorical discourse.

[9] For additional examples of the variety of theoretical approaches to rhetorical criticism, see G.P. Mohrmann, Charles Stewart, and Donovan Ochs, eds., *Exploration in Rhetorical Criticism* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1973).

By the early seventies, the monism of the fifties dissolves into a kaleidoscope of theoretical patterns. Scott and Brock, writing in 1972, report the demise of the old tradition and the emergence of a new "critical pluralism." While some are dismayed by this apparent Babel of critical approaches, the majority believe that its effects are salutary. Thus Karlyn Campbell, one of the most perceptive of our critics, expresses an enthusiasm for the work of her colleagues that has virtually no precedent in this field: "The presence of many theoretical and methodological viewpoints is not a sign of chaotic instability but evidence of the health and maturity of our discipline which is becoming increasingly able to account for the many meanings of rhetorical and communicative acts." The attack on the unitary modality of the tradition indicates "returning health," as well as "maturity and vigor," and it corresponds with the rise of "much more and better rhetorical criticism."[10]

Is Campbell's optimism justified? The evidence collected in this issue gives reason both to support and to qualify her judgment. On the positive side, no author, save perhaps the one assigned to deal with the traditional approach, expresses the sense of gloom that pervades the 1957 symposium. There are caveats and complaints about current practice, but these are balanced by genuine and sustained outbursts of enthusiasm. For the most part, the authors represented here are more disposed to work within the frame of existing critical systems than to overturn their foundations. This fact surely marks a distinction from and an improvement in the state of the art compared to what it was twenty-three years ago.

Much of the reason for this change of attitude arises from an apparent growth and internal development within a number of critical approaches. In many cases, the sheer bulk of the literature is impressive. For example, where Hochmuth could cite only one study to illustrate the application of Burkean criticism, Gronbeck lacks sufficient space to list the relevant scholarship. More important, however, as the literature expands in bulk, the various approaches integrate more sophisticated material into their conceptual apparatus, and they assume a more coherent shape. Logical sub-divisions emerge; gaps are uncovered; analysis of certain kinds of artifacts achieves greater precision, and problems encountered in earlier studies provide fertile ground for later research. Evidence for these developments is spread throughout the essays, ranging from Riches and Sillars' discovery of seven different foci for research in social movements to Farrell's account of the increasing sophistication in the logic of symptom criticism. In short, contemporary critics perceive a growing weight and depth of critical literature within a number of identifiable approaches, and this perception results in a new sense of confidence about the status of rhetorical criticism as a discipline.

The state of the art has improved; there are unmistakable signs of health, vigor, and maturity, but there is also reason to temper our optimism. Some of the old maladies seem to afflict the new forms of critical inquiry. The connection between theory and practice remains unclear, and complaints about critical works that drift away from the particular object of study still persist. These issues surface in almost all of the preceding essays, and their successive appearances should be noted carefully.

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[10] Karlyn Kohrs Campbell, "The Nature of Criticism in Rhetorical and Communications Studies," *Central States Speech Journal*, 30 (Spring 1979), 9-12.

Mohrmann attacks one aspect of the problem directly and bluntly, arguing that attempts at theoretical innovation often merely substitute new molds for old. The greatest fault of neo-Aristotelianism is its failure to encourage intensive analysis of texts. But new approaches sometimes embody this fault even as they reject the apparatus of the old criticism: "The earlier abuses of traditional concepts and current pretenses about them eventually coalesce." Preoccupation with disembodied categories, whatever the name and nature of the categories, deflects the critic's attention from its proper object — the particular rhetorical phenomenon under investigation. A new critical vocabulary does not necessarily guarantee fresh insight into texts.

Riches and Sillars deal with a different aspect of this problem when they maintain that a wall of separation divides theorists from practitioners of movement criticism. Critical studies rarely reflect the controversies that animate the theoretical literature, and the theorists argue about definitions and abstract concepts without paying much heed to critical practice. There is no hostility between the two camps, only mutual indifference. Thus, Riches and Sillars conclude: "At the present time, theory and practice appear to be separate. Each has little direct effect on the other."

Fisher, though he treats the matter rather briefly, manages to touch on both sides of the problem outlined above and to indicate how its aspects coalesce. The danger implicit in the generic approach, he argues, is that it can overwhelm the critic. By overwhelm, he clearly means that attention to genre theory *per se* may obscure the critic's perception of the concrete artifact. This form of idolatry divides into two species: the separation of theory from critical practice and the mechanical imposition of theory on the object of critical inquiry. The critic may succumb to the temptation to write theory instead of criticism and thus create principles that never touch the objects of criticism. Or, the critic may succumb to the temptation to impose genre on a work and thus distort it by forcing it into a preconceived mold. Both aspects of this problem occur not only in genre criticism but in all systematic approaches to criticism, and both arise from a failure to maintain proper balance between the main elements in the process of critical inquiry. The temptations toward imbalance, Fisher argues, may be avoided if the critic assumes a stance of "informed innocence." This phrase is striking, and the idea it conveys moves us some distance toward resolving the tension between theory and practice.

Farrell presents the most detailed analysis of the problem. This emphasis reflects the nature of his topic, since any consideration of model criticism immediately raises the questions of how abstract constructs relate to concrete particulars. Yet, despite Farrell's careful and sympathetic review of the literature, his essay repeatedly testifies to the absence of clear answers to this central question. The problem haunts each of the major types of model criticism.

In symptom criticism, the movement from model to artifact to social context involves dangerous leaps of inference at every step and a corresponding temptation to leap before looking. Farrell argues that certain critics mitigate the danger by examining the artifact in great detail and by tightening the logic of critical justification (Farrell does not explain, however, how a more detailed analysis of the particular allows the critic to escape the blinders imposed by the conceptual brackets contained within the model). Yet, even when such controls are deployed the model critic still confronts "a recurring difficulty with standards of evidence. There is, one might say, a tendency to chew more than is bitten off; some studies seem to be a model in search of an appropriate object of analysis."

The problems of didactic and thematic criticism are variations on the theme developed in the analysis of symptom criticism. Didactic models apply qualitative standards to artifacts, and subjective distortions are likely to influence the selection and conception of the model as well as the process of assessing the artifact. As a consequence, this approach often leads to a report on the state of the critic's glands rather than an analysis of a rhetorical event. Thematic criticism constructs rhetorical phenomena by gathering fragments into composite structures. By its very nature, this procedure encourages the critic to view specific artifacts as grist for his or her synthesizing mill; there is a temptation to disengage from the artifact and to concentrate on the abstract pattern. The dangers here, Farrell maintains, are serious, since "ontology does not yield comfortably to extrinsic systems." This warning concerning thematic criticism applies with equal force to all forms of the model modality. Though Farrell finds much to praise in the work of critics operating within the system, he also finds equally important signs of real or potential abuse. Thus, he leaves us dangling between the conceptual attractiveness of the approach and the perils involved in failing to harness its abstract energy to the requirements of particular cases.

Perhaps some of the reservations and complaints just summarized should be discounted. Nonetheless, they accumulate in a way that makes it difficult to deny that a problem exists. To put the matter simply, critics lack perspectives that enable them to make adequate connections between theoretical constructs and the concrete data of rhetorical experience. The rise of pluralism has broken us loose from old constraints and encouraged fresh activity in the field, but the multiplication of theories does not resolve the tension between theory and practice. Thus, one of the central problems diagnosed in the fifties still plagues us. We still complain that much of our criticism adheres too closely to formal *topoi* and that it leads us out of rather than more deeply into our subject. We no longer lack theories; yet, we still lack secure footing in the territory that lies between the regularity of abstract patterns and the idiosyncracies of particular rhetorical events. And this situation is especially troublesome, since the gap concerns the most fundamental step in the critical process — the act of interpretation by which the critic attempts to account for and assign meaning to the rhetorical dimensions of a given phenomenon.[11]

All these considerations lead us to Black's essay. That essay places the earlier reservations about theory into a conceptual frame of reference, and in doing so, suggests a new approach to the task of interpretation. Reacting to the problems inherent in criticism based on theoretical models, Black sharply distinguishes between such "etic" criticism and its 'emic" opposite. The etic stance, he argues, not only forces phenomenon into preconceived molds, but it is also stultifies rhetorical theory by shutting off access to fresh insight drawn from rhetorical practice. Consequently, Black advocates an emic approach to criticism, an approach that seeks to "coax from the critical object its own essential form of disclosure." The critic must deal with the work on its own terms, must interpret the work "without conscious expectations drawn from any source outside the work." But while the emic enterprise concentrates on the particular, it is not without theoretical consequences, since it stretches toward or eventuates in general truths about human experience. Theory is the outcome of critical practice, not its starting point.

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[11] I hesitate to use the term "interpretation" here and elsewhere in this essay, since it is ambiguous in general usage and subject to a number of differing technical definitions. Yet, no other term seems adequate. By interpretation, I refer to the process of assigning meaning to a text, and in rhetorical criticism, the process applies specifically to the meaning of the rhetorical dimensions of a work. Cf. Wayne Brockreide's concept of "explanation," in "Rhetorical Criticism as Argument," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 60 (1974), 170-171. For reasons that become clear later in this essay, however, I disagree with Brockreide's claim that explanation always depends on a concept or category system more general than the object under scrutiny.

This connection between theory and practice reverses the pattern that has dominated rhetorical criticism for the past few decades.[12] It indicates a significant shift in Black's own thinking; the implied emphasis on the relationship between critic and method in *Rhetorical Criticism* now changes to an explicit emphasis on the relationship between critic and subject.[13] On a more general level, this shift implies important consequences for the field as a whole, perhaps even more important than the consequences which followed Black's definitive attack against neo-Aristotelian method. Yet, the essay is very brief; as its title indicates, it is a note rather than a fully elaborated doctrine. And even as the essay promises to free us from old dilemmas, it raises new problems of its own. In short, Black's argument represents an important advance, but its premises must be tested and extended before its full significance can be appreciated.

Let me begin by disposing of an objection likely to be raised against Black's position — that it entails a radically subjective view of the act of interpretation. Obviously, Black does assume that interpretation is subjective, but the assumption strikes me as a strength and not a weakness. Interpretation is not a scientific endeavor. Systematic principles are useful in attempting to validate interpretations, but the actual process of interpretation depends upon conjectures and insights particular to the object at hand. Thus, E. D. Hirsch argues: "The very process and psychology of understanding are not reducible to systematic structure (despite the many attempts to do so), because there is no way of compelling a right guess by means of rules and principles. Every interpretation begins and ends as a guess, and no one has ever devised a method for making intelligent guesses."[14] As Farrell notes, even when the critic works within the confines of a fully articulated model, he or she must still rely on hunches to match features of the text with the configuration of the model. In and of themselves, abstract theories and models provide no rules for their connection to a particular phenomenon, and the study of this connection moves us outside the realm of any formal system.

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[12] There are some notable exceptions to this pattern. For example, Lawrence Rosenfield, "The Anatomy of Critical Discourse," *Speech Monographs*, 35 (1968), 50-69, treats the problem of the relationship between constructs and objects with considerable sensitivity. He argues that "although both norms and observations are logically essential, they need not be expressed separately" (p. 56). Thus, he leaves room for these two elements to interact in the critical process. Moreover, the notion of analog criticism, developed in the same essay, provides a very flexible mode of critical inquiry. Rosenfield extends his arguments with respect to the relationship between the critic and his subject in "The Experience of Criticism," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 60 (1974), 489-496. Also significant is Karlyn Campbell's attempt to develop a form of generic criticism that adheres strictly to the rhetorical features of a particular type of discourse. Her persistent emphasis on the fusion of elements within a genre allows for the construction of low level theoretical principles that maintain close contact with the objects of criticism. See, for example, her essay, "The Rhetoric of Women's Liberation: An Oxymoron," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 59 (1973), 74-86. The theoretical foundations of this approach are developed more fully in Karlyn Kohrs Campbell and Kathleen Hall Jamieson, "Form and Genre in Rhetorical Criticism: An Introduction," *Form and Genre: Shaping Rhetorical Action* (Falls Church, Virginia: Speech Communication Association, 1978), pp. 18-25. One should also note Walter Fisher's argument that rhetorical criticism represents a compromise between history and theory, "Method in Rhetorical Criticism," *Southern Speech Communication Journal*, 35 (1969), 101-109.

[13] For Black's own comments on this shift, see "Author's Forward" in the reprinted edition of his *Rhetorical Criticism: A Study in Method* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1978), pp. ix-xv.

A subjective conception of interpretation, then, in no way weakens Black's argument. Yet, having duly noted the subjectivity of the process, one wonders why Black excludes all expectations that the critic has prior to the examination of the work. In the terms of Fisher's oxymoron, innocence and information operate simultaneously; they are suspended in tension throughout the course of the interpretive process. The critic may begin with an attmpt to assume the stance of innocence, but the critic's information, the conceptual baggage unavoidably dragged into the act of observation, always intrudes and colors subjective understanding of the object at every moment of its observation. No act of will can eliminate this interaction, since it is bound up with the very nature of the interpretative act. Interpretation requires a translation from the expression in the text to the meaning assigned by the critic. Through sympathetic understanding, the critic may become "consubstantial" with the text, may merge his or her own consciousness into the text as he or she understands it. Yet, this process of identification brings with it the ambiguities of substance, since the merger joins together things that remain separate. If the text as it stands is a given, so is the critic's frame of reference, and the critic cannot assimilate the text until it is filtered through his or her own conceptual apparatus. Meaning cannot be assigned to expression except by reference to something outside the original expression, and thus, to cite Hirsch again, "all interpretations at some point have recourse to categories and conceptions that are not native to the original."[15] Directly or indirectly, consciously or unconsciously, extrinsic threads weave their way into the fabric of guess-work that forms the basis of interpretation. And since the process is so subjective, so little given to control by *a priori* dicta, I hesitate to eliminate on *a priori* grounds a process of guessing that begins with theoretical principles.

Black also attempts to dismiss etic criticism by arguing that it is circular, in that its theoretical principles presuppose its critical findings, and the critic sees only what he or she is disposed to look for. I do not deny this argument, but a careful analysis of Black's essay indicates that the emic critic confronts the same problem, though in a somewhat different form. The emic critic's progress from "suspension of judgment to the rendering of judgment" involves a crucial intermediate step: "But at some moment — probably early — in his engagement with an object, the emic critic will aspire to so sympathetic an account, that the critic's audience will understand that object, as in some sense, *inevitable.*" Thus, the critic at some point — probably early — in the interpretative process comes to form a conception of the object as a whole, a conception so strong as to appear inevitable. This conception, moreover, is something other than the actual expression in the text; otherwise, there would be no interpretation. Consequently, while still engaged in the interpretative act, the critic constructs a meaning for the object, an hypothesis or model that explains what it is. And the emic critic is now caught up in the same process that circumscribes the thought of his or her etic colleagues. Just as the etic critic, once convinced that his or her theory accounts for the rhetorical dimensions in a work, assimilates the text into the theoretical categories, so also the emic critic, once convinced of the inevitability of his or her conception of the work, forces the particular features of the work into conformity with the conceptual representation of its meaning. Since interpretation is inherently circular, this problem is unavoidable. The interpreter's explanatory hypothesis constitutes and organizes the internal evidence, and thus the evidence naturally tends to support the hypothesis.[16] The same cycle applies whether the hypothesis is abstracted from the text or brought in from an external source. The emic critic may circle closer to the ground, but like all other members of the critical flock, the flight is still circular.

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[14] E. D. Hirsch, Jr., *Validity in Interpretation* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1976), p. 170. Cf. Paul Ricoeur, "The Model of the Text: Meaningful Action Considered as Text," *Social Research*, 38 (1971), 548-553.

[15] Hirsch, p. 136.

Black's argument, then, requires qualification. The sharp outlines of his distinction between emic and etic criticism begin to blur, and the categorical preference for one over the other stretches the point too far. Extrinsic principles do not resolve the problem of how to interpret a subject, but subjects do not interpret themselves. The act of interpretation mediates between the experience of the critic and the forms of experience expressed in the text. To perform this act successfully, critics must vibrate what they see in the text against their own expectations and predilections. What critics are trained to look for and what they see interact in creative tension; the two elements blend and separate, progressively changing as altered conceptions of the one reshape the configuration of the other.

In theory, etically derived starting-points need not overwhelm this interaction. A knowledge of rhetorical theory is an important part of the critic's experience, and the sensitive critic may vibrate an extrinsic model against the text instead of imposing it on the text. In practice, however, few critics demonstrate the required sensitivity. The temptations to lose sight of the text are enormous, and, as the essays in this issue demonstrate, rhetorical critics succumb to these temptations with alarming frequency. Worse yet, the strong etic orientation in the field encourages a thorough preoccupation with abstract theories and methods and dulls the critic's sensitivity to the problem of interpretation. Thus, we obtain a proliferation of critical methods, without any of these methods solving the problem that lies at their collective origin — the neo-Aristotelian tendency to impose mechanistic categories on texts. The emic alternative, of course, is not a panacea. It is no guarantee against distortion of the text, but at last it forces the critic to engage the text before distorting it. In any event, we have erred so long in the direction of the abstract that it now seems reasonable to encourage efforts that begin with the particular. And although Black's categorical idiom overstates the case, the tendency of his argument has much to recommend it. I would reformulate his position in these terms: our scepticism about an interpretative construct should increase as a function of the distance between the origins of the construct and the particular object of study.

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[16] See Hirsch, pp. 164-169.

If a heavy concentration on theory leads to a neglect of particular objects, then it might follow that a heavy concentration on particulars leads to a neglect of theory. This reversal of terms and relationships is the basis for another objection to the emic approach — that the approach seduces the critic away from any contact with theory and leaves him or her abandoned to work on projects of isolated and momentary interest. Black implicitly attempts to blunt this objection by arguing that the critic plays a vital role in theory construction. On the surface, this position seems to entail a conventional appeal for an inductive approach to rhetorical theory, with particular critical studies providing the basic data. Yet, a close reading of his essay suggests a less conventional approach that profoundly challenges existing assumptions about the logic of inquiry in rhetorical criticism.

When interpret as a conventional inductive approach to theory, Black's position cannot withstand analytic scrutiny. Suppose, for example, he means that each critical act should work toward generalization. In that case, a very inadequate form of induction would be obtained. The theoretical precepts derived from critical practice would have the support of only one instance, and, in terms of traditional logic, the critical enterprise would yield a mass of hasty generalizations as its legacy. In response to this problem, the matter might be approached more systematically and accumulate the results of many critical studies in order to support theoretical generalizations. But this is no solution either, since it is subject to three crucial objections. These objections, in ascending order of importance, are as follows: (1) An emphasis on systematic induction immediately relegates the critic to the basement of the rhetorical edifice. Since the critic is absorbed completely in the particular case, the task of compiling and arranging the links between particulars belongs to those officed on a higher floor where conceptual tidiness counts for more than sympathetic and compassionate understanding. (2) Whoever has the task of turning the results of critical inquiry into sound inductive generalizations is bound to experience frustration. Each case study, after all, proceeds from a radical concentration on the particular phenomenon as a unique event. This type of inquiry does not lend itself to the controls necessary for proof of regularities across cases. The stuff of rigorous induction is not made of such quivering jelly as a compassionate understanding of the "Coatesville Address" or a sense of inevitability about Lincoln's speech at the Cooper Institute. (3) If the required inductive connections were possible, the emic critic would chart the course for his or her own extinction. As the works of the emic critic grow and multiply, so does the corpus of rhetorical theory. By extension, this process would lead to the identification of genuine regularities and the discovery of etic principles that really do hold across cases. Ultimately, emic criticism would become obsolete.

I do not believe that Black, wittingly or unwittingly, supports hasty generalization or a neo-positivistic commitment to particulars as a moment in the history of a grand theoretical enterprise. He must have some more subtle concept in mind, and he gives us an important clue to the deeper meaning of his position toward the end of his essay, when he compares the emic critic to the psychoanalyst. The analogy reverberates with implications for rhetorical criticism.

Psychoanalytical interpretation is simultaneously particular and theoretical. It originates in the unique subject, since the relevant motives are discovered in the particular case, and it ends with the particular case, since its results are confirmed in relation to the unique subject. Yet, the process always involves explanation, and the attempt to explain puts the analyst in contact with matters of theoretical interest. The contact with theory does not merely refer to standard collections of psychological lore or to the general knowledge the analyst acquires through training. Rather, in the context of the interpretative situation, the explanation of the specific phenomenon under investigation is itself theoretical. Whether self-generated or borrowed from external sources, principles always enter into explanations, but the forms these principles assume are inextricably bound up with the particular circumstances the analyst confronts. That is, theoretical precepts attain meaning only as they are vibrated against the particular case and are instantiated in an explanation of it. We have here a form of theory that eventuates in diagnosis, not in a hierarchical arrangement of principles nor in observations of regularities that lead to prediction. Theory functions not to generalize to or from cases, but within them.[17]

This paradigm of interpretative theory obviously has implications that extend beyond psychoanalysis. In fact, it seems relevant to any interpretative act that seeks to explain human behavior as it occurs in complex situations. Thus, in his analysis of anthropological interpretation, Clifford Geertz uses medical and psychoanalytical analogies that are strikingly similar to the ones found in Black's essay. Moreover, Geertz provides an intriguing account of how theory progresses in an emic system of interpretation: "The major theoretical contributions do not lie in specific studies — that is true in almost any field — but they are very difficult to abstract from such studies and integrate into anything one might call 'culture theory' as such. Theoretical formulations hover so low over the interpretations they govern that they don't make much sense or hold much interest apart from them . . . . One can, and this in fact is how the field progresses conceptually, take a theoretical attack developed in connection with one exercise in ethnographic interpretation and employ it in another, pushing it forward to greater precision and broader relevance."[18] The progress of theory in an interpretative discipline, then, does not take the form of a ladder leading up to and down from high order abstractions. Instead, such theory moves along the broken ground covered by the specific material of the discipline. The interpreter keeps his or her attention focused close to the ground, and while the explanation of what is seen often has potential implications that extend beyond the particular case, this potential is not realized in terms of a disembodied abstraction. An interpretative hypothesis moves across a discipline as a fire burns through a forest, growing, shifting, and receding in irregular patterns, gathering intensity from the matter it consumes, but having no existence apart from that matter.

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[17] This phrase is adapted from Clifford Geertz, "Thick Description: Toward an Interpretative Theory of Culture," *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), p. 26.

[18] Ibid., pp. 25-26.

Since rhetorical artifacts are complex expressions of human culture, they are clearly similar to the objects of study in anthropology and psychoanalysis. Yet, if there is an understandable reluctance to borrow a method from outside disciplines, we should remind ourselves that the approach to theory I have just outlined has strong precedent within the history of our own discipline. Though often neglected because of the contemporary preoccupation with Aristotle, there is a vital tradition in rhetoric that proceeds from the Greek sophists and Isocrates, to Cicero and Quintilian, and from there to the rhetoricians of the Renaissance. This humanistic tradition consistently opposes attempts to sever theory from practice. It is less concerned with forms of argument and devices of style *per se* than with the rhetorical principles embodied in a particular case. Thus, of the three traditional components of rhetorical pedagogy — theory, practice, and imitation — theory receives the least attention. The aim of rhetorical humanism is to produce a form of practical wisdom that expresses itself in the ability to encompass particular situations. Abstract theory, therefore, is suspect, since it deflects attention from concrete situations and is insufficient as a guide to practical affairs. The humanist prefers to learn principles through experience, experience gained by practicing the art or by studying the works of other practitioners. Finally, and to sum up all the previous points, this approach concentrates on the orator rather than the art of oratory, since eloquence depends upon the orator's creative ability to respond to complex and changing situations.

This humanistic tradition, of course, concerns itself mainly with the production rather than the analysis of rhetorical discourse. Yet, in an age when the critic regularly assumes the role of an active participant in the rhetorical drama, the transition between the function of the orator and of the critic creates little strain. And thus, the general perspective of the tradition merges with the main assumptions of contemporary interpretative practice; each reinforces the other, and both recommend themselves to us with added vigor.

All told, then, Black's conception of emic and etic criticism is less useful as a distinction between a theoretical as opposed to an atheoretical approach to criticism than as a distinction between two forms of critical theory. The etic approach, which has dominated contemporary criticism, follows the model of conventional scientific and logical theories. It seeks to discover high order abstractions that inform or govern rhetorical practice, and these abstractions enjoy a privileged status whether the system works from general precepts to particular cases or from particular cases to general precepts. Thus, etic theories eventuate in predicative generalizations or in extremely abstract models of the rhetorical transaction. Such theories provide an orderly direction for inquiry, and their proliferation has proved useful in breaking down the staid monism of earlier criticism. Yet, at worst, the etic approach preserves orderliness at the expense of the complexities of actual rhetorical phenomena, and, at best, it leaves the critic stuttering in the void between theoretical constructs and concrete artifacts, since it provides no practical means of articulating a connection between the two within the terms of its own logic.

The emic approach adopts the paradigm of interpretative theory. Its goal is explanation, and therefore the emic stance begins and ends with the particular object of study. Theoretical principles enter at the intersection between the object and the assignment of meaning to it, but such principles are so closely connected with the object of study that they are not easily isolated in abstract form. Consequently, theory does not progress in terms of a hierarchical arrangement of abstract principles. Hypotheses move laterally as they are drawn by intuition and analogy from one case to another, and since the objective is diagnosis rather than prediction, an hypothesis assumes a different form each time it is instantiated in a given case. Thus, form and matter interact and ultimately consume one another. The etic tension between theoretical constructs and particular objects resolves itself into a single unified explanation of the meaning of an object. The interpreter, generalizing within cases, discovers an abstract meaning in a concrete expression and the concrete expression of an abstract meaning.

Finally the contrast between emic and etic perspectives on critical theory is supplemented and completed by a consideration of the different conceptions of critical method that follow from these two approaches. A method, in the most basic sense of the term, is a way into a subject, and depending on the nature of the subject and the inclinations of its students, methods vary considerably in their specificity. The etic approach tends toward a formal logic of inquiry, a set of specific and systematic ways of studying the critical object. The emic approach describes a general outlook and orientation, a way of looking at the subject, but it does not prescribe the specific steps to be followed in the conduct of inquiry — that is a matter for the trained intuition of the critic. But while this method is not formally rigorous, it need not result in undisciplined research. Emic interpretation stresses the role of the critic, and in doing so, it shifts the standards of rigor from the method of investigation to the person of the investigator. The standards imposed on emic critics are severe. They must have a thorough knowledge of hypotheses relevant to rhetorical criticism, a knowledge gained not primarily through the study of theory but through intensive analysis of specific critical studies. And they must also have a detailed, intimate, and sympathetic understanding of the subject under investigation. Thus, we obtain a method that demands rigor from the critic even as it allows him or her the freedom to adapt to the changing demands of particular situations. It is a method that leads us more deeply into our subject, and it offers a way of solving the more than twenty year old problem of how to merge theory and practice in rhetorical criticism.